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ABSTRACT

This journal issue is devoted to the critical social theory of the German philosopher Jurgen Habermas and its implications for argumentation theory and practice. Topics discussed in the six articles are: the main themes of Habermas' research and their relevance to argumentation, Habermas and the dialectical perspective on argumentation, a contemporary linguistic interpretation of the concept of stasis, the contribution of Habermas to rhetorical validity, the rationality theories of Stephen Toulmin and Habermas, and a critical reconstruction of Habermas' holistic approach to rhetoric as social philosophy. (FL)

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[Special Issue: Critical Social Theory of Jurgen Habermas and Its Implications for Argumentation Theory and Practice.]

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This issue of *JAFA* is devoted to the critical social theory of Jürgen Habermas and its implications for argumentation theory and practice. Habermas' work is attracting a growing audience of American scholars in the fields of politics, social theory, and communication. Many of his ideas bear upon or help to illuminate current problems in the study of argumentation, as the essays in this issue should demonstrate.

The idea for this special issue came from the American Forensic Association's Research Committee, and planning was a joint activity involving the Research Committee and the *JAFA* Editorial Board. Manuscripts submitted for this issue were reviewed by three members of the Editorial Board and by Professor Thomas B. Farrell of Northwestern University, who also consented to write the introductory essay.

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HABERMAS ON ARGUMENTATION THEORY: SOME EMERGING TOPICS

Thomas B. Farrell

The process of introducing Jürgen Habermas to American audiences has been going on for some time now. In the collection of essays prepared for this special issue of *JAFA* on Habermas and argumentation, there are indications that the amenities of introduction are concluded and a substantive exchange has begun. Some special reasons help to explain the emergence of Habermas scholarship within communication studies. Social theory in the Habermas vein has devoured multiple fields of inquiry with yet the promise of an integrative vision. Thus far, sociology, history, economics, political science, philosophy of science, psychology, linguistics, and anthropology have offered conceptual instruments to Habermas' powerful range of interests. The "field" of communication, while still sensitive to charges of conceptual borrowing from other fields, was attracted to a perspective that integrated its various concerns. The initial stages of introduction thus found our own interests and concepts being reflected back to us from a perspective that was alien, slightly askew, and recognizably fresh.

A second reason for the influence of Habermas on communication research may reside in the sheer persistence of the Habermas critique of disciplinary methods themselves. Even as communication scholars carried on their own extended debate about the relative strength of research paradigms, works such as *Knowledge and Human Interests* and *Theory and Practice* seemed to offer historical validation to alternative methods of inquiry in the humanities. This second phase of our introduction to Habermas thus led to an applied criticism and variation of our concepts, methods, and assumptions about communication. Perhaps coincident with this reflection has been our increased preoccupation with the theory and practice of argumentation in all phases of scholarly investigation.

Finally, and most apparent to those who study argumentation, has been the direct contribution of Habermas' recent research in communicative action to the refinement and revision of our constructs in forensics and the theory of controversy. Along with the authors of these essays, Habermas shares an interest in a theory of argumentation that is philosophically coherent, relevant to the discursive explanation of social issues, and prescriptive for the theorist and practitioner. Since students of argumentation have begun to submit their own assumptions to greater self-scrutiny, consensual direction, and even empirical testing, it is understandable that our introduction to Habermas should culminate with the *use* of his constructs for increasingly rigorous scholarly applications.

With all these reasons for the growing contribution of Habermas to the theory and practice of communication and argumentation, there are emerging problems as well. Some of the initial enthusiasm for a unique philosophical tradition has yielded to reservation over

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particular questions and even exasperation with the ever-widening circle of Habermas' unfinished projects. All of these stances are exhibited in this journal. Yet there is no need to accept the Habermas program in full, in order to appreciate its relevance to many of our specific purposes. For the most part, the essays here grant the significance of Habermas' work for a variety of related fields, and then construct heuristic applications of that work to identifiable problems in rhetorical argumentation and communication research. Instead of retracing what would be—for many—familiar ground,[1] my own part will be to overview these studies from a conceptual perspective that still invites refinement and extension.

For communication scholars, the most conventional placement of the theory of argumentation and controversy is within the classical rhetorical tradition. The traditional view of rhetorical argument envisioned a union of wisdom and eloquence, thought and action best represented by the good citizen speaking well. Yet in one respect at least, the contemporary American rhetorical tradition must be found wanting. While the mission and impetus of the classical theory of rhetorical argument was supplied by a theory of dialectic, contemporary American philosophy (whether analytic, empirical, or pragmatic) has not been dialectical in method or substance. The traditional assumptions of dialectic have not changed, even as some cultures have expanded its scope enormously. Among the assumptions of dialectical method are: *first*, the notion that reason is either identical or essential to being; *second*, the idea that reason itself progresses or improves through the critical encounter of opposed positions; and *third*, the belief that an important facet of truth may be uncovered by considering things in their "generality."[2] That is, instead of asking whether this particular war is just, we inquire after war in general or (as Socrates did) justice in general. But if rhetoric is no longer the counterpart of dialectic, or if it is the counterpart of a dialectic that cannot be found, then the broadest perspective that could ground the critical movement of practical reason will be without authority as a method.

Initially of great importance to the contributions of Habermas is his own grounding in the European dialectical tradition. Chief among the assumptions of his Frankfurt heritage is the belief that society itself may be experienced as an arrangement of ideas that invites rational critique. The purpose of the essay by Joseph Wenzel is to unpack the key terms in Habermas' social philosophy while explicating the emerging conception of "dialectical argument" throughout his work.

The analysis of dialectical argument is framed by Wenzel's perspective on the varying conceptions of argumentation in general—a helpful overview of the ways in which our own discipline has defined its central terminology. But more than this, Wenzel's essay introduces the reader to the necessary historical placement of Habermas, where the understanding of his dialectical assumptions properly begins. After explicating the Habermas conditions of competence, as well as the interests he relates to various types of inquiry, Wenzel reformulates the Habermas ideals of speech situation and generalizable interests to construct a conception of argumentation as dialectical.

[1] For an important interpretive exposition of the Habermas philosophy of communication, see Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1978), especially Chapter 4.

[2] Richard McKeon, "Dialectic and Political Thought and Action," *Ethics*, 65 (October, 1954), 3-16.

The idealized interpersonal relationship itself emerges as the primary embodiment of dialectical argumentation. Although the historical implications of the Habermas dialectic are not pursued here, Wenzel's application of the dialogue concept to argument should bring theorists of argument full circle to an encounter with our long-neglected dialectical tradition.

As Wenzel's essay notes, the theory of argumentation recently has broadened its admissible characterizations of subject matter for scholarly investigation. Yet it was not always thus. Failure to consult and reflect upon the dialectical roots of rhetorical argumentation has tended to restrict the study of argumentation to one of two definitional characterizations: self-contained artifact and contextual instrument. Not only does such a restriction render problematic the identification of clear instances of rhetorical argumentation, but it also confines the force and relevance of the arguments themselves to the intentions and circumstances of their use. For rhetorical arguments to acquire a distinctive binding capacity as assertive or normative action, it may be necessary to reformulate traditional conceptions of reason, as well as to broaden the theory of language itself. Two of the essays which follow seem especially concerned with the *use* of the Habermas inquiry for such a reformulation in argumentation: Brant Burleson's "On the Foundations of Rationality: Toulmin, Habermas, and the *a Priori* of Reason," and Susan Kline's "Toward a Contemporary Linguistic Reformulation of the Doctrine of Stasis."

Burleson's comparative study selects as its point of departure the concept of rationality itself. Burleson notes at the outset that the Toulmin critique of reason had sought to avoid the contrary weaknesses of absolutism and relativism —both implications of the variable characterization of argument discussed earlier. Nevertheless, it is Burleson's contention that—despite Toulmin's careful attention to the problem—his own attempted reformulation of reason exhibits variations of these same difficulties. Toulmin's less-than-optimal line of thinking thus affords Burleson a rationale for invoking Habermas' alternative solution to the problem of characterizing reason in general and argument in particular.

Burleson's major claim is that the Habermas philosophy of communication affords a more heuristic direction for the grounding of rational thought than does that offered by Toulmin. Central to this use of Habermas are his notion of the ideal speech situation and its relationship to a *warranted consensus*. For Habermas, unlike Toulmin, very specific criteria must be met before the consensus employed to establish any argumentative procedure is understood to be *warranted*. The implications of this Habermas reformulation are qualified through the assumptions that Habermas and Toulmin appear to share: a commitment to field-dependent warrants for disciplinary concept formation, and a characterization of argument as substantive reasoning. To these, Habermas' most recent investigations would add a third commonality: both Toulmin and Habermas apparently have endorsed an evolutionary "paradigm" of conceptual development in disciplines (Toulmin) and even societies (Habermas). It remains to be seen whether this particular symmetry of position is to the advantage of either theorist.

To accept the Habermas direction for the reformulation of reason is to acknowledge that more specific constructs in argumentation theory may also be affected and reworked through this

program of research. The essay by Susan Kline marks the most explicit use of the Habermas program to reconstitute traditional rhetorical constructs relevant to argumentation. The thesis of this essay is that the traditional rhetorical construct of *stasis* (a point of issue dispute or "rest" in rhetorical controversy) may be more fruitfully understood through the Habermas philosophy of communicative action. Important to the claims of the Kline essay are an expository indictment of the traditional stasis construct and also a creative application of the Habermas theory of communicative action. It is relevant to the latter concern that Habermas has attempted to deal with the problems of argumentation as discourse (especially in *Legitimation Crisis*), but he has *not* attempted to refine the construct of "issue" from his communicative perspective. The elaboration, in this essay, of felicity conditions for argumentation as a form of request thus represents an important extension of Habermas' own theory. Whether Habermas would endorse the reformulation of his idealized competence conditions as constraints upon strategic action is less important than the possible resolution this conceptual synthesis provides.

Finally, in this schematic survey, there are emerging conceptual problems for the relationship between argumentation and the standards for validation of argument—particularly as validation occurs within the social sphere. Habermas has himself pointed to the decline of the traditional public sphere as ground of deliberation. In the absence of substantive public guidance, current conceptions of argumentation have been hard pressed to perform a prescriptive or judgmental function for actual social practice. Those theories that conceive of argumentation itself as a social process encounter difficulties in elaborating standards of assessment that are independent of and irreducible to their social constituents. The discursive and formalistic conceptions of argumentation construct a model of practice that is internally consistent but removed from actual performance. Here the problem is the apparently irremediable discrepancy between thought and action. For many, it is the promise of a *prescriptive* theory of argumentation relevant to social practice that is the most attractive feature of the Habermas program. Indeed, Habermas makes the bold claim that his theory allows for the valid criticism of social reasoning. The remaining two essays in this collection address the success of Habermas in this, his most ambitious task.

The verdict of these writers is mixed. James Aune's study of validation problems in the theory of argumentation, "The Contribution of Habermas to Rhetorical Validity," finds within the Habermas program a potential solution to the problem of is and ought. Relying upon a reworking of two related types of communicative action—symbolic and strategic action—Aune is able to suggest that the standards for rational argument are idealized relationships among social interests. Viewed as a social construction, then, the Habermas criteria seem to avoid the pitfalls of formalism and relativism discussed earlier. Yet, Aune finds two unresolved problems with the Habermas formulation—problems that seem to undermine its power as a social prescription. First, there is the inattention of Habermas to the aesthetic dimension of language. By relying upon a view of validity grounded entirely in *communicative* action, many of the creative nuances in language are not only lost, but are actively dismissed as invalid corruptions of optimal communicative practice. And second, Aune concurs with Alvin Gouldner that the Habermas criteria are too restrictive for

certain arguable cases of rational social speech. Aune concludes that these defects are not irreparable, however, by virtue of alternative constructs within contemporary argumentation research.

The analysis by Cushman and Dietrich seems less optimistic for the recovery of Habermas' prescriptive vision of social validation. In fact, the Cushman and Dietrich essay is clustered thematically about a series of indictments lodged against the internal validity of the Habermas framework. First, Cushman and Dietrich are unable to find within the Habermas theory any explanation for the inevitability of audience resistance to rhetorical communication. This problem is termed an authenticity crisis. Second, Cushman and Dietrich claim that Habermas is limited by his own dialectical aims to a view that allows only for the critique of argumentative understanding in *principle*. This presumed absence of a place for rhetorical argument is termed a legitimation crisis. And finally, Cushman and Dietrich allude to the situational linkages between practical problems and strategic speech to dramatize the failure of Habermas to ground the discursive practice of problem solving. This last problem is termed a technical crisis for the Habermas framework. To the extent that these oversights represent explicit aims and failings of Habermas' theory, then Cushman and Dietrich are on firm ground in concluding that the prescriptive force and relevance of these derived constructs are open to serious question. Cushman and Dietrich nonetheless qualify this verdict by asserting that even these conceptual difficulties may be overcome through existing research programs.

The problems of value idealization, omission of aesthetic nuance, and neglect of situational practice may be viewed either as glaring oversights in the Habermas schema, or as an invitation to the reformulation of traditional rhetorical argument. To those who would consider the latter course, there are some signs of internal tension throughout Habermas' most recent translated research (reviewed elsewhere in this issue). In addition to the increasingly provisional character of this work, one detects in Habermas a more serious discrepancy between the idealism of bracketed obligations governing individual and social actions, and the emerging evolutionary relativism of social norms and values themselves. Among Habermas scholars and interpreters, it is his analysis of generalizable validity claims (to truth, right, and justice) that has received the greatest attention. And from Habermas' own perspective, these normative claims have seemed both to be implicit in speech acts themselves, and yet applicable to variations in individual performance. But at the same time, his social theory has labored to determine, explain, and evaluate the differing levels of value consciousness among cultures and social systems. It has never been totally clear how individual and social norms derive their relative authority, when these values confront each other. Like Hegel and Marx before him, Habermas has had to maintain the paradoxical integrity of an individual moral stance that is not subservient to the deterministic machinations of historical processing. In his previous work, I had thought that the recognition and evaluation of repressed social interests was grounded in principles of competence that were, in turn, derived from the ideal speech situation. The counterpart of historical dialectic thus seemed to be the rhetorical invention of practical obligations among particularized social interests. Now, however, it appears that an evolutionary metaphor derived from individual de-

velopmental psychology may have displaced the uncertain problematic of social rationality and its resultant creative tension. If so, the discomfort of rhetoric in such a determinate schema would be nothing new. It is, of course, too early to dismiss this latest Habermas venture into alien disciplinary territory. But it is late enough to raise questions for those who would turn to Habermas himself to resolve problems relevant to our own discipline.

All in all, the various essays presented here offer an emerging climate of informed opinion on Habermas that promises to yield more sophisticated and reflective research in the theory and practice of argumentation. Yet we should not labor too hard to fit these articles together. Not only are they an extension of a philosophy that still struggles for internal cohesion; more important, they stand on their own as pieces of interpretive scholarship. In addition to clarifying issues that demand careful discussion, they represent a revitalization of what is most important in the rhetorical tradition: the critical spirit[3] of humanistic inquiry.

[3] A phrase most applicable to the work of Herbert Marcuse, to whose memory this essay is dedicated.

JÜRGEN HABERMAS AND THE DIALECTICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ARGUMENTATION

Joseph W. Wenzel

Jürgen Habermas has been called by his chief American interpreter "the most influential thinker in Germany today."[1] Now that his work has come to the attention of scholars in speech communication, we may expect to see his influence spread, for Habermas' wide-ranging investigations offer insights for many branches of communication studies. In this paper, I propose to discuss the relevance of some of his ideas to certain topics in argumentation. In general, I intend to show how Habermas' treatment of epistemological problems in his pursuit of a critical social theory may help us to understand the nature, significance, and promise of a dialectical perspective in the study of argumentation. I will begin with an argument of my own concerning three perspectives on the study of argument, follow that with an explication of relevant ideas from Habermas' work, and then draw out the implications for my thesis.

Three Perspectives on Argumentation

In the literature of argumentation, we can discern three relatively distinct perspectives that are brought to bear on the study of argument.[2] They are reflected in the principal senses in which we use the words "arguing," "argumentation," and "argument." These ways of referring to phenomena in ordinary language are, I believe, implicit and unreflective references to imperfectly grasped notions of argument as *process*, as *procedure*, and as *product*.[3] Each sense of the term refers to a definite perspective taken in the examination of arguers and their behaviors, and the perspectives are (at least roughly) aligned with the disciplines that have historically been concerned with argument. Thus, the senses of argument as *process*, *procedure*, and *product* correlate respectively with the perspectives of rhetoric, dialectic, and logic. Concerning the first and last of these, I think there would be little disagreement that they constitute different outlooks on argument and that construing argument in each way gives rise to uniquely different questions, data, and explanations. The status of a separate and distinct

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1 Thomas McCarthy, "Translator's Introduction," in Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), p. vii. I use the term "interpreter" in a double sense, for McCarthy has also published the most extensive systematic study of Habermas' thought to date: *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1978).

2 Sorting out senses of and perspectives on argument is not a novel exercise. The logical and rhetorical views are discussed by Walter R. Fisher and Edward M. Sayles, "The Nature and Functions of Argument," in *Perspectives on Argumentation*, edited by Gerald R. Miller and Thomas R. Nilsen (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1966). Daniel O'Keefe has distinguished phenomena studied as argument in "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Winter 1977), 121-128. Some of the ideas expressed here closely parallel those of Maurice Natanson, "The Claims of Immediacy," in *Philosophy, Rhetoric and Argumentation*, edited by Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965), pp. 10-19.

3 Although I adopted this terminology independently, I find concurrence in Wayne Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Winter 1977), 129; and Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, *Decision by Debate* (2nd ed.; N. Y.: Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 224-225.

dialectical perspective, however, might be less readily accepted. To clarify, therefore, I will give a brief account of my understanding of each of the three perspectives.[4]

We speak of arguing in the *process* sense when we refer to the phenomena of one or more social actors addressing symbolic appeals to others in an effort to win adherence to theses.[5] We think of the persons observed as situated in the real world of socio-political action speaking to others so situated for the sake of influencing their cognitions and actions. The issues and problems discussed in such interactions are understood to be real, concrete, and immediate (at least to the participants). The rhetorical perspective is employed to explain how, and with what effects, the forms and materials of persuasive discourse are used in such interactions. The central concern of rhetoric is to determine what constitutes *effectiveness* in arguing.

The term "argumentation" is often used to mark the sense of argument as *procedure,* referring to the notion of argument as a systematic management of discourse for the purpose of achieving critical decisions.[6] Despite all the vagaries of meaning attached to it, the term "dialectic" has historically conveyed the idea of a structure of discourse marked by critical intention. Thus, it seems to be an appropriate label for the procedural outlook. The dialectical perspective construes argumentation as a methodology for bringing the natural, unreflected processes of arguing under some sort of deliberate control.[7] The participants are understood, not as mere social actors, but as self-conscious advocates, and their purpose is conceived as a uniquely cooperative effort to reach joint understanding or critical decision. The element of cooperation is revealed most clearly in their overt agreement on rules of procedure. In its purest idealization, dialectic transcends the mundane world of social action, suspends the constraints of situated social reality, and treats its subject-matter as hypothetical and abstract. We seldom find dialectic in the pure state, of course; but the method is commonly employed in an instrumental fashion in situations that remain bound to the constraints of social action (e.g. legislatures and legal trials). Nevertheless, these manifestations of the ideal of dialectic are qualitatively different from random, unstructured arguings by virtue of their reliance on stated rules of procedure and commitment to the cooperative means of decision-making. The central concern of dialectic, therefore, is to determine and promote conditions for *candid* and *critical* argumentation.

The third sense of the term "argument" focuses on the *products* of naive social actors arguing or of self-conscious advocates engaged in argumentation. In this, the logical sense, argument is described in terms of "premises and conclusions" or "evidence and claim," by which someone chooses to represent meanings abstracted from the on-going processes of communication. Thus, argument in the logical sense comes into being when someone construes particular utterances as arguments.[8] Granted, such argument-things are imperfect representations of utterance and of meaning;

[4] See also Joseph W. Wenzel, "Perspectives on Argument," *Proceedings of the AFA/SCA Summer Conference on Argumentation, 1979,* in press.

[5] For one important approach to the process sense, see Charles A. Willard, "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument: The Constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association,* 14 (Winter 1978), 121-140.

[6] Ehninger and Brockriede, Chapters 1-2.

[7] The outstanding treatment of this theme in recent years is Douglas Ehninger, "Argument as Method," *Speech Monographs,* 37 (June 1970), 101-110.

nevertheless, they constitute significant efforts to objectify aspects of meaning which may appropriately be subjected to analysis and criticism. So, the logical sense of argument comes into play whenever we engage in the useful business of "laying out" and judging arguments. We apply the logical perspective, therefore, guided by a concern for the *soundness* of arguments.

The three senses of argument are grounded in our nature as beings who communicate, who represent reality to one another through language, and who strive for agreements. Our natural needs for communication have given rise to the practical and theoretical interests which are historically associated with rhetoric, dialectic, and logic: the interest in adapting discourse effectively to particular audiences and situations; the interest in devising cooperative means for testing theses and reaching decisions; and the interest in discovering and employing standards for rational judgment. Those three interests, and the disciplinary perspectives which serve them, are not separable along sharp lines; they interpenetrate one another in complex ways. Still, they constitute useful starting points for lines of investigation needed to achieve understanding of all the complex phenomena embraced in the notion of argument.

Until recently, the dominant modern conception of argument was a logical one. Argumentation was described in terms of "reasoned discourse," by which was usually meant the making and criticizing of arguments.[9] In the last decade or so, the rhetorical perspective has come forward as an alternative approach. Both philosophical treatises and textbooks lately exhibit a theoretical interest in describing arguing as a rhetorical process.[10] Research proceeds under the aegis of these two perspectives in a manner that suggests they are fairly well recognized. Toulmin's revolution in logical theory continues to guide a reformulation of the standards of rational criticism to serve the logical perspective. And empirical and critical studies continue to build up our understanding of argument as rhetorical process. Brockriede and O'Keefe's recent exchange on conceptions of argument suggests that the rhetorical and logical perspectives are coming to be recognized as coordinate perspectives rather than competing paradigms.[11]

The dialectical perspective, in contrast, seems to have been recognized only dimly and sporadically. It has been recognized dimly in textbooks on argumentation, where the dialectical sense is implicit in the customary treatment of debate as a method of critical decision making.[12] Theoretical articles that explore the dialectical perspective have appeared sporadically; their very rarity makes them stand out as unique approaches. Ehninger's landmark essay on "Argument as Method" is one such work that caused us to think in a fresh way about argument.[13] Brockriede's provocative essay on "Arguers as Lovers" is another.[14] Both works have stimulated

[8] Wayne Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 11 (Spring 1975), 179-182.

[9] I have reference here to virtually all of the popular texts on argumentation and debate that were in use in the 1950's.

[10] E.g., Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1969); Richard Crable, *Argumentation as Communication: Reasoning with Receivers* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1976); Richard Ricke and Malcolm Sillars, *Argumentation and the Decision Making Process* (N. Y.: Wiley and Sons, 1975).

[11] See their articles cited in notes 2, 3, and 8.

[12] E.g., Ehninger and Brockriede.

[13] Ehninger does not support my analysis of the dialectical perspective exactly, but the stress on "method" or "procedure" is notable.

[14] Wayne Brockriede, "Arguers as Lovers," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 5 (Winter 1972), 1-11.

considerable discussion of the issues they raise, but there does not seem to be a general recognition that they represent a perspective on argument that is not only different from the rhetorical and logical viewpoints, but is equally important. A clear recognition of the three viewpoints can only serve to advance our understanding of argument. The unique importance of the dialectical perspective will become clearer as we examine some of the work of Jürgen Habermas.

Habermas' Critical Theory of Communication

Jürgen Habermas' work is in the tradition of the Frankfurt School, a name given to that group of German scholars who came together in 1923 to form the Institute for Social Research.[15] Like theirs, Habermas' work has been dedicated to the broad objective articulated by Karl Marx: *"relentless criticism of all existing conditions,* relentless in the sense that the criticism is not afraid of its findings and just as little afraid of the conflict with the powers that be."[16] The ultimate goal of Habermas' critical social theory is emancipation of mankind from all forms of domination, not merely that of external force, but more importantly the domination of false consciousness rooted in ideology. Habermas understands ideology as "a structure of systematically distorted communication, that is, a communication system whose key semantic contents are sheltered from the light of critical examination."[17] Inasmuch as ideology permeates the communication structures that constitute social life, emancipation through critique becomes a process of freeing communication:

> The course of the social self-formative process . . . is marked . . . by stages of reflection through which the dogmatic character of surpassed forms of domination and ideologies are dispelled, the pressure of the institutional framework is sublimated, and communicative action is set free *as* communicative action. The goal of this development is thereby anticipated: the organization of society linked to decision-making processes on the basis of discussion free from domination."[18]

A theory of communicative competence, incorporating a normative basis for communication free from domination, has, therefore, become the keystone of Habermas' critical theory of society. Before examing that theory, however, we need to take note of certain aspects of contemporary ideology which on one level, constitute a need for critique, and on another, constitute a philosophical impediment to it.

Modern ideologies have given rise to a complex of false consciousness that may be described, in a first approximation, in terms of 1) the alienation of persons from politics, 2) the scientization of politics, and 3) the constriction of the concept of reason. Concerning political alienation, Habermas writes, "The depoliticization of the mass of the population and the decline of the public realm as a political institution are components of a system of domination that tends to exclude practical questions from

[15] For a historical account of the Frankfurt School and its intellectual development see Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973); see also Thomas B. Farrell and James A. Aune, "Critical Theory and Communication: A Selective Literature Review," *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* 65 (February 1979), 93-107.

[16] Quoted in Richard J. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976). Bernstein provides a useful general introduction to Habermas.

[17] Brant Burleson, "Rhetorical Criticism as the Critique of Ideology: The Perspective of Jürgen Habermas," a paper presented at the Central States Speech Association convention, April, 1978, p. 7.

[18] Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests,* trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), p. 55. Hereafter cited as *KHI.*

public discussion."[19] What has happened historically is the abandonment of the classical conception of politics as the application of practical wisdom (*phronesis, prudentia*) for the creation of "the good and just life," and its replacement by the modern social science that transforms practical questions into technical ones. Habermas contrasts the two:

> The old doctrine of politics referred exclusively to *praxis*, in the narrow sense of the Greeks. This had nothing to do with *techne*, the skillful production of artifacts and the expert mastery of objectified tasks. In the final instance, politics was always directed toward the formation and cultivation of character. . . . For Hobbes, on the other hand, the maxim promulgated by Bacon, of *scientia propter potentiam*, is self-evident: mankind owes its greatest advances to technology, and above all to the political technique, for the correct establishment of the state.[20]

Thus, since Hobbes' time, politics has become increasingly "scientized" as the guidance of practical wisdom is replaced by scientifically grounded methods of technical control and social engineering.[21] Simultaneously, the mass of mankind becomes alienated from political action and decision. The classical conceptions of politics understood that "the enlightenment of . . . political will according to standards of rationally binding discussion can proceed only from the horizon of communicating citizens themselves and must lead back to it."[22] In many modern industrial societies, on the other hand, "no attempt at all is made to attain a rational consensus on the part of citizens concerning the practical control of their destiny. Its place is taken by the attempt to attain technical control over history by perfecting the administration of society, an attempt that is just as impractical as it is unhistorical."[23]

These movements may be understood in relation to the rise of positivism which has had the effect of constricting the theory of knowledge and the concept of reason. "Until the threshold of the nineteenth century," Habermas writes, "what characterized philosophy's position with regard to science was precisely that science was accorded its legitimate place only by unequivocally philosophical knowledge. Theories of knowledge did not limit themselves to the explication of scientific method—they did not merge with the philosophy of science."[24] Even for Kant, "the critique of knowledge was still conceived in reference to a system of cognitive faculties that included practical reason and reflective judgment."[25] Subsequently, that broad conception of reason was abandoned by philosophy itself:

> For the philosophy of science that has emerged since the mid-nineteenth century as the heir of the theory of knowledge is methodology pursued with a scientistic self-understanding of the sciences. "Scientism" means science's belief in itself: that is, the conviction that we can no longer understand science as *one* form of possible knowledge, but rather must identify knowledge with science.[26]

Thus, it becomes necessary in Habermas' program to find a way of restoring reason to the practical and philosophical spheres from which it has been driven by positivism, for an enlarged conception of knowledge and reason will provide necessary groundings for a critical social theory.

Habermas' treatise on *Knowledge and Human Interests* seeks to recover the

[19] Jürgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 75. Hereafter cited as *TRS*.
[20] Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. John Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 42. Hereafter cited as *T & P*.
[21] *T & P*, p. 43.
[22] *TRS*, p. 74.
[23] *T & P*, p. 255.
[24] *KHI*, p. 3.
[25] *KHI*, p. 3.
[26] *KHI*, p. 4.

reflective reason that was lost in the evolution of positivistic philosophy:

> I am undertaking a historically oriented attempt to reconstruct the prehistory of modern positivism with the systematic intention of analyzing the connections between knowledge and human interests. In following the process of the dissolution of epistemology, which has left the philosophy of science in its place, one makes one's way over abandoned stages of reflection. Retreading this path from a perspective that looks back toward the point of departure may help to recover the forgotten experience of reflection. That we disavow reflection *is* positivism.
>
> The analysis of the connection of knowledge and interest should support the assertion that a radical critique of knowledge is possible only as social theory.[27]

Although we cannot trace all of Habermas' steps "over abandoned stages of reflection," a summary of the results of his investigation will reveal an important aspect of his systematic way of overcoming philosophy with its attendant constriction of reason, scientization of politics, and alienation from political discourse. This part of the solution is his theory of cognitive interests.

Habermas' theory of cognitive interests is "an attempt to radicalize epistemology by unearthing the roots of knowledge in life."[28] McCarthy provides a neat summary of the theory:

> Habermas classifies processes of inquiry . . . into three categories: *empirical-analytic sciences*, including the natural sciences and the social sciences insofar as they aim at producing nomological knowledge; *historical-hermeneutic sciences*, including the humanities . . . and the historical and social sciences insofar as they aim at interpretive understanding of meaningful configurations; and the *critically oriented sciences*, including psychoanalysis and the critique of ideology (critical social theory), as well as philosophy understood as a reflective and critical discipline. For each category of inquiry he posits a connection with a specific cognitive interest: "the approach of the empirical-analytic sciences incorporates a *technical* cognitive interest; that of the historical-hermeneutic sciences incorporates a *practical* one; and the approach of critically oriented sciences incorporates the *emancipatory* cognitive interest" [*Konwledge & Human Interests*, p. 308]. These connections are to be demonstrated through an analysis of fundamental categories and of the methods of establishing, testing and, applying the systems of propositions proper to the type of inquiry in question. The cognitive interests appear—as Habermas puts it—as "general orientations" or "general cognitive strategies" that guide the various modes of inquiry. As such they have a "quasi-transcendental" status.[29]

The technical interest is grounded in "the invariant relation of the species to its natural environment, which is established by the behavioral system of instrumental action. . . . The conditions of instrumental action arose contingently in the natural evolution of the human species. At the same time, however, with transcendental necessity, they bind our knowledge of nature to the interest of possible technical control over natural processes."[30] The technical interest, thus, describes the orientation of the sciences and technologies which relate man to nature in an instrumental fashion. It is the orientation to work.

"Whereas the technical interest arises from the imperatives of a life bound to work," McCarthy explains, "the practical interest is anchored in an equally deep-seated imperative of a form of life bound to work: the survival of societal individuals is linked to the existence of a reliable intersubjectivity of understanding in ordinary language communication."[31] The practical interest is pursued in a disciplined fashion in the cultural sciences, but all persons, as so-

27 *KHI*, p. vii.
28 McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 55.
29 McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 58. As McCarthy recognizes, this formation raises several problems which he takes up in the ensuing pages.
30 *KHI*, p. 35.
31 McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, pp. 68-69.

cial beings, have a share in it: "Hermeneutic understanding is only a methodically developed form of the dim reflexivity or semi-transparency with which the life of prescientifically communicating and socially interacting men takes place in any case."[32] The incorporation of the practical interest in all human interaction, and its status *vis a vis* the technical interest are, at once, clarified by McCarthy:

> The communication structures presupposed by the community of natural scientists cannot themselves be grasped within the framework of empirical-analytic science. The dimension in which concepts, methods, theories, and so forth are discussed and agreed upon, in which the framework of shared meanings, norms, values and so on is grounded, is the dimension of symbolic interaction that is neither identical with nor reducible to instrumental action. The rationality of discourse about the appropriateness of conventions or the meaning of concepts is not the rationality of operations on objectified processes; it involves the interpretation of intentions and meanings, goals, values, and reasons. Thus the objective knowledge produced by empirical-analytic inquiry is not possible without knowledge in the form of intersubjective understanding. This availability of an intersubjectively valid pre- and meta-scientific language, or a framework of shared meanings and values, is taken for granted in the natural sciences. The cultural life-context . . . , of which scientific communication is only one element, belongs instead to the domain of the cultural sciences.[33]

Thus, the practical interest describes the orientation of the cultural, historical, hermeneutic sciences that study the relation of man to man in communicative interaction with a view to maintaining and improving intersubjectivity of understanding.

The emancipatory interest arises out of the same human activities of work and interaction as the others, but at a step removed:

> Habermas' synthesis comes into sharp focus when we examine the third type of knowledge-constitutive interest: the emancipatory interest. It is at once derivative, and the most basic cognitive interest. If we reflect upon the forms of knowledge and rationality guided by the technical and practical interests, we become increasingly aware of the internal demand of reason for free, open communication, and for the material conditions permitting such communication. A consistent, adequate understanding of the empirical-analytic sciences demands the existence—as Peirce and so many who have followed him have argued—of an open, self-critical community of inquirers. And the practical interest that governs the historical-hermeneutic disciplines seeks to promote such open, nondistortive communication. Implicit in the knowledge guided by the technical and practical interests is the demand for the intellectual and material conditions for emancipation, i.e., the ideal state of affairs in which nonalienating work and free interaction can be manifested.[34]

The emancipatory interest is incorporated in the critical sciences.

As an entree to the notion of "critical science," Habermas takes psychoanalysis as a prototype. In that therapeutic method, as in critique of ideology applied socially, the subject is brought to reflect upon previously constituted knowledge in the technical and practical spheres to uncover "ideologically frozen relations of dependence that can in principle be transformed. . . . The methodological framework that determines the meaning of the validity of critical propositions of this category [i.e., critique or psychoanalysis] is established by the concept of *self-reflection*. The latter releases the subject from dependence on hypostatized powers. Self-reflection is determined by an emancipatory cognitive interest."[35] The ideal of emancipation through critique can be referred to a familiar parallel:

> We can also grasp what Habermas is up to by appealing to a much older model in philosophy,

[32] *KHI*, p. 148.
[33] McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 69.
[34] Bernstein, p. 198.
[35] *KHI*, p. 310.

the Socratic model of self-knowledge whereby, through a process of dialogue, the participants achieve self-knowledge and self-reflection which are therapeutic and effect a cognitive, affective, and practical transformation involving a movement toward autonomy and responsibility.[36]

In the concluding section, I will argue that the recognition of the three cognitive interests, and particularly the "restoration" of the practical and emancipatory interests, constitutes an important step toward a dialectical perspective as a necessary component of a conception of reason. The practical wisdom and self-understanding sought by the practical and emancipatory interests cannot, by their nature, be attained through scientific method. They must be sought through some method of discourse. In the notion of critical science guided by the emancipatory interest, we may anticipate Habermas' understanding of how knowledge is to be grounded, for the emancipatory interest envisions "an organization of social relations according to the principle that the validity of every norm of political consequence be made dependent on a consensus arrived at in communication free of domination."[37] That principle is developed further in Habermas' theory of communicative competence.

In his 1965 inaugural lecture at Frankfurt University, Habermas suggested the direction in which his epistemological inquiries were to lead:

The human interest in autonomy and responsibility is not mere fancy, for it can be apprehended a priori. What raises us out of nature is the only thing whose nature we can know: *language*. Through its structure, autonomy and responsibility are posited for us. Our first sentence expresses unequivocally the intention of universal and unconstrained consensus.[38]

That statement contains a remarkable foreshadowing of the theory of communicative competence which was to be developed years later. The theory combines a universal pragmatics describing the possible conditions of achieving understanding in communication, a consensus theory of truth, and a conception of the ideal speech situation, to effect a radical reconceptualization of rationality.

Habermas' "universal pragmatics" is a systematic approach to disclosing the conditions necessary for achieving understanding in ordinary language communication.[39] Following Searle, Habermas attempts to uncover the universal features of speech acts, and thus refers to an ideal speech situation:

Above all communicative competence relates to an ideal speech situation in the same way that linguistic competence relates to the abstract system of linguistic rules. The dialogue-constitutive universals at the same time generate and describe the form of intersubjectivity which makes mutuality of understanding possible. Communicative competence is defined by the ideal speaker's mastery of the dialogue-constitutive universals, irrespective of actual restrictions under empirical conditions.[40]

The dialogue-constitutive universals include: 1) personal pronouns, 2) forms of address, 3) deictic expressions, 4) performative verbs, and 5) non-performative intentional verbs and some modal verbs.[41] Habermas himself has focused on the performative verbs to produce a fourfold classification, which is at the same time a classification of speech acts. McCarthy summarizes them as

communicatives (e.g. say, express, speak, ask, mention), which express the pragmatic meaning

[36] Bernstein, p. 199.
[37] *KHI*, p. 284.
[38] *KHI*, p. 314.

[39] Jürgen Habermas, "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence," *Inquiry*, 13 (1970), 360-375. See also T. A. McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," *Philosophy of Social Science*, 3 (1973), 135-156; and McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, chapter 4.
[40] Habermas, "Towards a Theory," p. 369.
[41] McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," p. 138. See also Habermas, "Towards a Theory," pp. 369-371.

of utterances *qua* utterances; *constatives* (e.g. state, assert, describe, explain), which explicate the meaning of statements *qua* statements; *representatives* (e.g. admit, confess, conceal, deny), which are used with propositional contents containing intentional verbs (e.g. like, wish, want) to explicate the meaning of the self-representation of the speaker before the hearer; and *regulatives* (e.g. command, forbid, allow, warn), which explicate the meaning of the speaker/hearer's relation to rules which can be followed or broken.[42]

From this classification, two types of speech acts become of immediate importance. *Constative* speech acts thematically stress a claim to truth, and the speaker thereby "proffers a speech-act-immanent *obligation to provide grounds*."[43] If in the course of ongoing interaction, the speaker is unable to dispel doubt about his claim, it may become the subject of a "theoretical discourse" (a term to be explained shortly). *Regulative* speech acts make normative claims entailing "a speech-act-immanent *obligation to justify*. . . . Again, if his immediate justification does not dispel an ad hoc doubt, we can pass over to the level of discourse, in this case a practical discourse."[44] What, then, is the special status of the "level of discourse"?

"According to Habermas," McCarthy observes, "a smoothly functioning language game rests on a background consensus formed from the mutual recognition of at least four types of validity claims that are involved in the exchange of speech acts."[45] Beside the claims to truth and normative appropriateness, mentioned above, are claims to comprehensibility and sincerity; these may be set aside as extraneous to the immediate problem of establishing rational agreement. When the background consensus, with respect to truth claims and normative claims, is called into question, it may be restored within the context of ongoing interaction. Otherwise, the parties "are faced with the alternative of breaking off communication altogether, switching over to strategic forms of interaction (such as conflict or competition), or raising communication to the level of argumentative discourse for the purpose of examining the problematic (hypothetical) claims."[46] For Habermas, "discourse" is the name of a special form of communication in which the constraints of action are suspended and theses in doubt are tested by "the force of the better argument." Habermas maintains a consistent distinction between "discourse" and what he variously calls "action," "communicative action," and "interaction." The former has special status:

> In actions, the factually raised claims to validity, which form the underlying consensus, are assumed naively. Discourse, on the other hand, serves the justification of problematic claims to validity of opinions and norms. Thus the system of action and experience refers us in a compelling manner to a form of communication in which the participants do not exchange information, do not direct or carry out action, nor do they have or communicate experiences; instead they search for arguments or offer justifications. Discourse therefore requires the virtualization of constraints on action. This is intended to render inoperative all motives except solely that of a cooperative readiness to arrive at an understanding. . . .[47]

When called into question in communicative action, both truth claims and normative claims can be referred to such an argumentative procedure to seek appropriate grounding, the one in theoreti-

[42] McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," p. 138.

[43] Jürgen Habermas, "Was heisst Universalpragmatik?" in *Sprachpragmatik und Philosophie*, ed. K.-O. Apel (Frankfurt, 1976), pp. 252-253. Quoted in McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 285.

[44] Habermas, "Was heisst Universalpragmatik?" pp. 252-253. Quoted in McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 285.

[45] McCarthy, "Translator's Introduction," *Legitimation Crisis*, p. xiii.

[46] McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 290.

[47] *T & P*, p. 18.

cal discourse and the other in practical discourse.

Although theoretical and practical discourse may be distinguished,[48] they refer to the same epistemological framework: "both are cases of the rationalization of a choice in the medium of unconstrained discussion."[49] Both have reference to the "ideal speech situation." That crucial concept can be explained with reference to notions of universalizability, scope of discussion, and symmetry of power.

In a statement that recalls Perelman's "universal audience," Habermas sums up his consensus theory of truth: "Truth is not the fact that a consensus is realized, but rather that at all times and in any place, if we enter into a discourse a consensus can be realized under conditions that identify it as a justified consensus. Truth means 'warranted assertability.'"[50] To further explain what can count as a justified consensus, Habermas characterizes the "force of the better argument" by an analysis of the formal properties of the ideal speech situation. One of these formal (pragmatic) properties is freedom in the scope of argumentation: "His central thesis is that these conditions must permit a progressive radicalization of the argument; there must be the freedom to move from a given level of discourse to increasingly reflected levels."[51] At perhaps the most reflective level, the very question of what should count as knowledge may be called into question. Finally, Habermas specifies a symmetry requirement for discourse:

> . . . one arrives at a number of symmetrical relations for the ideal speech situation. Pure intersubjectivity is determined by a symmetrical relation between I and You (We and You), I and He (We and They). An unlimited interchangeability of dialogue roles demands that no side be privileged in the performance of these roles: pure intersubjectivity exists only when there is complete symmetry in the distribution of assertion and dispute, revelation and concealment, prescription and conformity, among the partners of communication. As long as these symmetries exist, communication will not be hindered by constraints arising from its own structure.[52]

The symmetry requirement represents for Habermas "a linguistic conceptualization of what are traditionally known as the ideas of truth, freedom, and justice."[53] Those ideas are inextricably linked in his conception of the communicative ideals that characterize rationality.

The final problem of this development of Habermas' thought is the counterfactual nature of the ideal speech situation. The imputation of such a possible arena of accountability is, he realizes, often a fiction. Nevertheless, it is a fiction that operates for us as an ideal:

> the ideal speech situation is neither an empirical phenomenon nor simply a construct, but a reciprocal supposition unavoidable in discourse. This supposition can, but need not be, counterfactual; but even when counterfactual it is a fiction that is operatively effective in communication. I would therefore prefer to speak of an anticipation of an ideal speech situation. . . . This anticipation alone is the warrant that permits us to join to an actually attained consensus the claim of a rational consensus. At the same time it is a critical standard against which every actually realized consensus can be called into question and tested.[54]

The theory of communicative competence, thus, provides a formal analysis of the conditions for a critical social theory that were anticipated in his early work,

[48] For a full account, see McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, pp. 291-333.

[49] *TRS*, p. 7.

[50] Jürgen Habermas, "Wahrheitstheorien," in *Wirklichkeit und Reflexion* (Pfullingen, 1973), pp. 239-240. Quoted in McCarthy, "Translator's Introduction," *Legitimation Crisis*, p. xvi.

[51] McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 305.

[52] Habermas, "Towards a Theory," p. 371.

[53] Habermas, "Towards a Theory," p. 372.

[54] Habermas, "Wahrheitstheorien," p. 258. Quoted in McCarthy, "Translator's Introduction," *Legitimation Crisis*, pp. xvii-xviii.

namely, a specification of the nature of communication free from domination. The ideal speech situation expresses, at once, the goal of critical theory and the standard of rationality against which critical discourse must be measured. Regardless of whether the final formulation, itself, stands up against the inevitable critical scrutiny, Habermas' broad and penetrating investigations along the way cannot help but be of profound interest to scholars in argumentation.

Implications for a Dialectical Perspective on Argumentation

At the outset of this paper, I said that Habermas' work would illuminate the nature, significance, and promise of a dialectical perspective on argument. To some extent, the foregoing exposition supports that thesis without elaboration. It will be worthwhile, however, to draw out certain conclusions more explicitly.

In the first place, we must recognize the identity of suppositions posited in the dialectical conception of argument and in Habermas' ideal speech situation. Both anticipate the fulfillment of formal pragmatic conditions for discourse free from the domination of power relationships and of ideology. More than anyone before him, Habermas clarifies how the notion of a "rational consensus" can be referred to the supposition of consensus achieved under appropriate conditions of discourse. The dialectical perspective on argument seeks to understand how discussion can be managed to test theses critically, and Habermas provides a suggestive new array of terms and categories by which that understanding may be improved. As tentative theses to be explored, for example, we may advance the following: dialectical argument can be fully realized only when (1) speakers are competent in performing speech acts of all kinds, (2) they are able to set aside the constraints of action, (3) they are able to range freely among levels of reflection, and (4) they are able and willing to respect a symmetrical allocation of power. How the relevant skills, dispositions, interpersonal relations, and structures of interaction can be realized poses a challenge to scholars in argumentation.

A second set of implications for argumentation arises from Habermas' theory of cognitive interests. As I observed before, the very recognition of the practical and emancipatory interests compels our attention to the patterns of communication that serve them. So long as the conception of knowledge is confined to the bounds of a technical interest, one can (on a superficial analysis) relegate to language the task of merely reporting the "facts" that science discovers. As Habermas (and others) have argued, however, the conceptual systems that determine what the "facts" are cannot, themselves, be validated by science, but are dependent upon an intersubjectivity achieved in practical discourse within the scientific community.[55] Moreover, one hardly can conceive of a human community or of a philosophic enterprise without accepting something like Habermas' portrayal of the practical interest, of the emancipatory interest, and of discourse as their rational foundation. Habermas' analysis leads inexorably to the realization that some form of communicative interaction that tests theses "by the force of the better argument" must be the foundation of all rational enterprises. The case for the importance of the dialectical perspective hardly could be made more persuasively.

It may be possible to apply Habermas'

[55] The achievement of intersubjective understanding in science is a main theme of Stephen Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

theory of cognitive interests to comprehend levels or types of dialectical argument and, further, to find in the analysis of each type a clarification of problems that have arisen from a holistic conception of argumentation. As Habermas himself has suggested, there are different internal logics at work in theoretical discourse guided by the technical interest, political discourse guided by the practical interest, and critical discourse guided by an emancipatory interest. Aside from the study of those internal logics, a number of other questions are posited. Might the problematic notion of "risk," for example, be clarified by investigating how it comes into play in each sort of discourse? Might Brockriede's "arguers as lovers" be better understood by reference to the emanicipatory interest? And how does the constitution of knowledge under the aegis of each cognitive interest give rise to uniquely different structures of reasoning and proof? Many more such suggestive lines of inquiry arise on a close reading of Habermas' works.[56]

The significance of Habermas' writings for argumentation can be brought out further by relating his version of dialectical argumentation (the ideal speech situation) to the perspectives I have called the rhetorical and the logical. In brief, he gives support to the claim that rhetorical appeal and the rules of logic come to fruition only in a dialectical framework. Ordinary communicative action, i.e., rhetorical behavior, may achieve an apparent consensus, but that cannot lay claim to the title "rational consensus" outside of a dialectical framework. Rhetoric can serve a critical epistemic function only under the control of dialectic. This is the implicit understanding of such procedures as discussion, debate, and democratic decision making. Rhetorical skill enables us to *express* our understandings; dialectical procedures enable us to *test* them. The agreements reached through such techniques may be called "justified" only by reference to the formal conditions of discourse which are characterized by their approximation to "ideal speech." The logical perspective, likewise, comes into full force under dialectical conditions—the suspension of the constraints of action, the thematizing of doubted claims, the portrayal of whole argument structures, and the free movement to and from all levels of reflection. These are the optimum conditions for logical analysis, criticism, and judgment. Thus, if argument is a "way of knowing," it is so because of the dialectical striving for an ideal communication system in which rhetorical and logical capacities are united for critical purposes.

The promise of the dialectical perspective is that we can strive to achieve an ideal form of communication which is, at the same time, an ideal form of life. To be sure, the material conditions for that ideal may never be realized. But the task of trying is one that recommends itself with especial relevance to scholars in argumentation. The philosophers among us may contribute by extending and testing Habermas' analysis. Pragmatists in the field may study actual structures of discourse and decision-making with reference to the formal conditions of ideal dialectic. And the activists among us may continue to expand opportunities for unconstrained discussion among persons at large. All will be serving the purpose of emancipation that Habermas has portrayed: the construction of a human community on the interconnected principles of truth, freedom and justice.

[56] An extensive bibliography on Habermas will soon be available: Susan Kline, "A Bibliography of Works by and about Jürgen Habermas," *Political Theory*, in press.

TOWARD A CONTEMPORARY LINGUISTIC INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF STASIS

Susan L. Kline

Developed over 2500 years ago by Greek and Roman rhetoricians, the concept of stasis has evolved into a system of stock issues for analyzing policy propositions. This transformation has precipitated various criticisms, one of which is whether the concept of stasis possesses any real utility for understanding the process and nature of everyday argument. The concept of stasis, however, is of direct utility to understanding everyday argument if it is viewed as implicit in the pragmatic structures of the communicative event. Specifically, I will argue that the system of stasis can be regarded as a set of conventional expectations for the successful understanding and performance of a communicative act. Such a view can be derived from work on the speech act in the tradition of Austin and Searle, and the work of the German social theorist, Jürgen Habermas. Accordingly, the present essay sketches limitations of the traditional concept of stasis, then turns to the work of speech act theorists and Habermas for a reinterpretation of the concept, and offers a concluding comment on the advantages of a linguistic conception of stasis.

Limitations on the Traditional Concept of Stasis

The doctrine of stasis was elaborated by Cicero and Quintilian as a general system for analyzing propositions.[1] These theorists contended that there are four basic questions or "positions" on which any controversy will turn: questions regarding whether or not something is the case (the Conjectural Position), questions regarding whether one name or another should be applied to a given fact (the Definitive Position), questions regarding the quality and value of a given act (the General Position), and questions regarding appropriate legal or political procedure (the Procedural Position). "In rhetorical analyses," as Dieter characterized Quintilian, "the subject matter is intellectually laid hold upon, or 'grasped' and investigated logically with reference to its stasis."[2]

Contemporary argumentation theorists have elaborated the system of stasis into a set of stock issues associated with the adoption of a policy proposition.[3] Debaters especially, apply these familiar "stock" questions in analyzing policy propositions: (1) Is there an ill in the

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[1] Cicero, *De Inventione*, trans. H. M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1960); Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1920-22). Also see Otto A. Dieter, "Stasis," *Speech Monographs*, 17 (1950), 345-369; Wilbur Samuel Howell, "The Positions of Argument: An Historical Examination," in *Papers in Rhetoric*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (Saint Louis: Washington University Press, 1940), pp. 8-17; and Wilbur Samuel Howell, ed. and trans., *The Rhetoric of Alcuin & Charlemagne* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1941), pp. 36-45.

[2] Dieter, p. 368.

[3] See, for example, Warren Choate Shaw, *The Art of Debate* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1922); and Lee S. Hultzén, "Status in Deliberative Analysis," in *The Rhetorical Idiom*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1958), 97-123.

present state of affairs?; (2) Is this ill curable?; (3) Will the proposed remedy cure this ill?; (4) Will the cure cost too much? The assumption remains that application of these questions represents the most rational method for analyzing a policy proposition since they are an exhaustive list of the potential issues around which controversy may emerge. That is, stock issues, or stases, represent all the general issues that might be contested by an opposing party.

The evolution of the classical doctrine of stasis into a list of stock issues has precipitated several criticisms, which, in turn, raise important questions about the status and utility of the concepts.[4] The first question concerns the utility a system of stasis has for understanding the multiplicity of purposes argumentative discourse can serve. Whereas we have developed a rich set of concepts for understanding how persons argue in the institutionalized settings of the courtroom and legislature, we know less about the forms arguments take in everyday discourse. In everyday talk propositions are not fixed, but negotiated, procedures are not formalized, but tacitly followed, and persons are not role enactors, but interactants. Such differences are obvious and have clear significance. It becomes important, therefore, to explore the form stases take in naturally occurring discourse and to see if and how they constrain the behavior of everyday arguers. These matters are pursued in the second section of this essay.

A second question raised by criticism of the traditional conception of stasis concerns whether points of stasis are suggestive guidelines for propositional analysis or the invariant structural conjunctions around which controversy can emerge. Aristotle and Quintilian considered stases to be the four kinds of change imposed on us by nature and contemporary rhetoricians such as Hultzén claim that "human nature in our society" imposes deliberative stases upon us.[5] However, Hultzén and others do not analyze precisely how and why the traditional stases are necessarily an exhaustive and socially grounded system for deliberative analysis. If a system of stasis is a culturally invariant mode of analysis for all deliberative situations, how is it that stases have conventionalized force that constrain the kinds of disagreement that may ensue over a proposition? How is it that a system of stasis determines the obstacles to the understanding and acceptance of a proposition?

To answer these questions, one must understand the doctrine of stasis from an alternative perspective, namely that the stock issues or stases on which a fixed proposition is accepted or rejected are rational properties of the communicative act itself. In the following section, I will argue that there exists within the structure of any utterance a set of issues that are the conditions under which that utterance is considered to be meaningful and accepted by an audience. Such issues are also the points on which social actors may disagree with regard to the speaker's aims. As such, these issues are points of stasis, that is, points at which the communicative act could be challenged and rejected by the hearer. Employing Searle's distinction between regulative and constitutive rules, these points of stasis are the constitutive rules that create and define the very forms of behavior they regulate.[6] Thus if points of

[4] See, for example, Robert P. Newman, "Analysis and Issues—A Study of Doctrine," *Central States Speech Journal*, 13 (1961), 43-54; and Raymond E. Nadeau, "In Defense of Deliberative Stock Issues," *Central States Speech Journal*, 13 (1962), 142-146.

[5] Hultzen, p. 111.

[6] See John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay*

stasis are imposed upon us by nature, it is because they are lodged within the structure of the communicative act.

Such a conception of stasis can be derived from Habermas' work.[7] Building upon Austin's and Searle's analyses of the speech act,[8] Habermas suggests that there are a set of preconditions inherent within the communicative event that must be accepted in order that the speech act be successfully understood and completed. These preconditions for the successful accomplishment of speech acts function as stases. These stases are a product of the structure of the event itself and are the event-specific conditions for the successful performance of a given speech act. Depending upon the specific purpose for speaking, stases are the issues over which interactants potentially may have disagreements. Habermas believes these points of stasis derive their "force" from a general set of claims that speakers hold themselves accountable for when they speak. Thus where traditional analyses have conceived stases to be the types of motions or causes in nature, Habermas' approach grounds the doctrine of stasis in the general constitutive conditions of communication and its specific forms. Accordingly, in the remaining sections of this essay the work of Habermas and speech act theorists is drawn upon to articulate a contemporary linguistic analysis of the doctrine of stasis.

A Reinterpretation of the Concept of Stasis

Habermas' work is rapidly influencing Anglo-American philosophy and social science.[9] His entire project is undergirded by his "theory of communicative competence," a theory in which Habermas articulates the constitutive conditions of rational discourse.[10] Habermas' theory addresses many problems of traditional concern to students of rhetoric, argument, and communication; what follows, however, is a discussion only of those aspects of his theory relevant to an interpretation of the concept of stasis.

The Task of Universal Pragmatics

One aim of Habermas' theory of communication is to describe the universal features of action that allow speakers to understand one another.[11] Habermas begins by observing that in any communicative event speakers express particular relationships to varying domains of reality present in the speaking situation. These domains are the external world about which we make statements, the inner reality of the speaker, the normative reality of society, and the medium of language. Every event of communication proceeds against the backcloth of already existing shared understandings that define each of these domains of reality; the very accomplishment of shared understanding in communication requires the preexisting shared agreement and interpretation of these reality structures.[12]

in the Philosophy of Language (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 33-42.

[7] See Jürgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), Chapter 1.

[8] See Searle; and J. L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1962).

[9] For a systematic explication and analysis of Habermas' program, see Thomas A. McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1978). For bibliography of works on Habermas, see Susan L. Kline, "A Bibliography of Works by and on Jürgen Habermas," *Political Theory*, in press.

[10] For a critical exposition of Habermas' theory of communication, see Brant R. Burleson and Susan L. Kline, "Habermas' Theory of Communication: A Critical Explication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, in press.

[11] Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Chapter 1.

[12] Jürgen Habermas, "Some Distinctions in Universal Pragmatics: A Working Paper," *Theory and Society*, 3 (1976), pp. 155-167.

In order to understand how these domains of reality are expressed through speech actions, Habermas draws upon Austin's and Searle's analyses of the speech act. Following Searle, Habermas designates the speech act as the elementary unit of speech, that is, "the smallest (verbal) utterance sequence which is comprehensible and acceptable to at least one other competent actor within a communications context."[13] In performing a speech act, a speaker both expresses certain contents and situates those contents within a particular relational context that allows for the understanding of those contents. The establishment of this relational context in a speech act is accomplished through the use of a "performative" verb. To give an example, in the sentence, "I promise p," "promise" is the performative verb and "p" is the propositional content. Thus when presented in an explicit form speech acts reveal a characteristic double structure consisting of (1) a performative verb expressing the speaker's action with reference to (2) some propositional content that establishes the "connection of the communication with the world of objects, etc."[14]

Habermas develops his universal pragmatics by classifying speech acts according to the domain of reality thematized by the performative verb. Thus he classifies speech acts into four categories: communicatives (e.g., say, express, speak, ask, mention), which focus on the relationship between a speaker and the linguistic medium of the utterance; constatives (e.g., state, assert, describe, explain), which focus on the relationship between a speaker and the referent of his utterances; representatives (e.g., admit, confess, deny, conceal), which pertain to the relation between a speaker and his intentions, feelings and attitudes; and regulatives (e.g., command, forbid, allow, warn) which pertain to the social relationship between a speaker and hearer.[15]

Given this classification of speech acts, Habermas develops his theory of communicative action by explaining how speech acts generate a speaker's intended relationship with a hearer. He contends that in order for a speaker and a listener to understand one another, they must mutually recognize that a set of preconditions (or stases) exist for the successful completion and acceptance of their speech acts. These conditions are implicitly presupposed conventional understandings that must be met for a speaker to perform a specific speech act acceptably, "non-defectively," and understandably. These conditions commit a hearer to a particular understanding of a propositional content and a particular interpersonal relationship with a speaker.

Speech Act-Specific Conditions

In analyzing the conventional presuppositions under which the speaker can be said to have uttered an "acceptable" speech act, Habermas relies upon Searle's differentiation of "propositional content," "preparatory," "essential" and "sincerity" rules.[16] The *"propositional content"* conditions refer to the presupposed ability of a hearer to interpret similarly the propositional content of a speech act. A proper use of the propositional component of a speech act demands that the speaker recognize that there is one and only one experience to which the propositional content can refer (the existence presupposition), that the expressed propositional content is a

13 Habermas, "Some Distinctions," p. 155.

14 T. A. McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 3 (1973), 137.

15 McCarthy, "A Theory," p. 138.

16 Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Chapter 1.

sufficient indication for a hearer to identify an experience to which the observation applies (the presupposition of identifiability), and that the hearer undertake similar acts of predication (the act of predication). In other words, in order for a speech act to be completed successfully, a hearer must understand the meaning of its propositional content. A second type of condition requisite for a successful speech act is called *"preparatory rules."* Preparatory rules (also called felicity conditions) determine the context restrictions typical for a particular speech act. For example, one preparatory condition for a request is that the speaker believe the listener is able to carry out the suggested action. If this conventional precondition is not met by the speaker, the speech act is pointless. A third class of presuppositions are the *"essential rules"* of the speech act. The essential rules detail the explicit meaning of the interpersonal relation to be established; that is, in uttering a speech act a speaker engages himself in a way that has consequences for his actions. Thus, for example, the utterance of a request *counts as an attempt* to get a listener to do A. Finally, the fourth kind of presupposition, called the *"sincerity rule"* of a speech act, places certain restrictions on the psychological state of the speaker. A promise, for example, is to be uttered only if the speaker intends to do A.

Taken together, these presuppositions form the conditions under which a speech act may be uttered acceptably and understandably. It is the fulfillment of these act-specific conditions that determine the creation of the intended relationship with a listener and thus the success of the speech act. Moreover, these conditions establish the potential bases of disagreement between interactants. Speakers take responsibility for these different types of conditions, answering legitimate complaints alleging the nonsatisfaction of any one of them. As such, these conditions can be considered to be *stases*, or the specific issues around which controversy may emerge.

Numerous speech act theorists have worked out the conditions for the valid performance of particular kinds of speech acts, such as requesting, promising, asserting, warning, greeting, advising, and so on.[17] To give an example of such analyses, the following list is a representative compilation of the constitutive conditions of a request:

Rules for a Request

The form of a request consists of Speaker (S) addressing Hearer (H) in an utterance (T), in which S requests an action (A). The valid performance of a direct request for action depends upon fulfilling these conditions:

Preconditions and Essential Rule

1. S and H believe the following conditions obtain. (This belief is secured through the imputation of validity claims).
2. The request places H under the obligation to do A at an assumed time and for S to accept H's doing A, given all other conditions.
3. S and H have established a focused encounter.
4. S asks H to do A in the proper circumstances.
5. S expresses a proposition that H is requested to do A. S means T to be a request for H to do A.

Preparatory Conditions

6. Need for Action: A needs to be done or should be done for a purpose Y.
7. Need for Request: S believes H would not do A without the request.
8. Ability: S believes H is able to do A.
9. Willingness or Obligation: S believes H is willing to do A or H has an obligation to do A.
10. Speaker's Rights: S has the right to ask H to do A.

[17] See, for example, Scott Jacobs, "Some Formal Procedures for Doing Requests in Conversation," unpublished manuscript, University of Illinois, Urbana; William Labov and David Fanshel, *Therapeutic Discourse: Psychotherapy as Conversation* (New York: Academic Press, 1977); and Searle.

Sincerity Condition
H. S wants H to do A.

The conditions of a particular kind of speech act such as requests can be understood to be the stases or the structural conjunctions around which listeners address their disagreements. Speakers tacitly use these stases to determine a listener's potential objections. Speakers use stases to analyze speaking situations because they are the conventional conditions listeners use to understand and accept the speaker's claims.

Significantly, it is these conditions that bind a listener to consider a speaker's utterances seriously. Habermas calls this the "generative power of speech acts"[18] and explains this phenomenon as follows:

> the bond into which the speaker is willing to enter with the performance of an illocutionary act means a guarantee that, in consequence of his utterance, he will fulfill certain conditions—for example . . . drop an assertion when it proves to be false, follow his own advice when he finds himself in the same situation as the hearer; stress a request when it is not complied with . . . and so on.[19]

However, if in fact a speech act has the illocutionary force to move a hearer to rely on the speech act-typical commitments of a speaker, what is the source of the "power" to generate the relation intended by the speaker?

Habermas unravels this problem by explaining that the "illocutionary force" of a speech act is derived from the mutual recognition of a set of general universal "validity claims" operating in every speech situation. These general validity claims underlie the flow of normal communication and enforce the speaker's obligation to fullfill speech act-specific conditions. In Habermas' analysis these claims are mutually recognized by interactants to be cognitively testable; therefore, they have a rational basis attached to them.

Universal Validity Claims

Habermas observes that in every communicative act there exists a particular relationship between the external world, the normative social world, the inner subjective world of the speaker and the medium of language itself. Habermas argues that interpersonal understanding is made possible by the presupposed agreement between actors that these relationships are valid. That is, underlying the possibility of communication is a reciprocally imputed assumption by actors that their utterances are intelligible, true, sincerely voiced and appropriate with respect to prevailing social norms. These four "validity claims" are universal, and in smoothly functioning communication are naively accepted by interactants. For communication to proceed non-problematically, interactants must reciprocally assume that their speech acts are intelligible, true, sincerely expressed and socially appropriate.[20]

When communication becomes problematic between persons, Habermas claims it is because one or more validity claims associated with an utterance is called into question. Normally, communicators resolve their disagreements regarding an utterance's comprehensibility, truth or appropriateness through simple explanations, explications and justifications. Issues regarding the sincerity of the speaker are resolved by comparing the speaker's utterances with his actions or by consulting a third party. Habermas notes that more serious challenges to the intelligibility or the

[18] Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, p. 34.
[19] Ibid., p. 62.
[20] For a discussion of validity claims, see Jürgen Habermas, "Theories of Truth," trans. Richard Grabau, unpublished manuscript, Purdue University.

sincerity of an utterance are resolved through further discussion or observation at the level of communication he terms "communicative action." However, serious challenges to the truth or appropriateness of an utterance are resolved at a different level of communication, a level Habermas calls "discourse."[21]

Discourse is a mode of communication in which the truth or appropriateness of an utterance is examined critically by interactants and either accepted or rejected with arguments. In order for participants in discourse to be influenced solely by the "force of the better argument," they must, first, suspend their judgments about the truth or appropriateness of the contested claim until a consensus has been reached, and second, be willing to set aside all motives except a cooperative willingness to come to a rational agreement. When participants reach a satisfactory consensus regarding the contested validity claim, discourse ends and there is a return to routine communicative action.

While these conditions for discourse may seem to describe ideal communicative states, Habermas contends they are implicit in the very structure of nonproblematic communication. Normal communication proceeds just because each communicator assumes that the other intentionally holds the beliefs he does, intentionally follows the norms he does, and is capable of justifying these beliefs or norms if called upon to do so. For Habermas, the supposition that persons hold themselves to be rationally accountable for their claims to truth and appropriateness is the glue that makes human communication possible; the possibility of engaging in discourse to produce rational agreement about matters of truth or normative appropriateness is implicit in the very idea of a competent communicator.

Habermas' conception of universal validity claims and his insight regarding the "supposition of mutual accountability" represent important tools for understanding the nature of a system of stasis. For Habermas' theory asserts that regardless of the speaker's communicative purpose, there exist a set of validity claims resident within the structure of the communicative situation that bind a speaker and listener to a particular relationship and understanding. Validity claims enforce the speaker's and hearer's commitment to accept and fulfill the specific conditions of a speech act. Thus actual or potential disagreements revolve around the suspension of one or more of these context-invariant validity claims and the consideration of a particular speech act-specific condition.

Reinterpreting the Traditional Concepts of Stasis and Stock Issues

It should be apparent that speech act conditions are equivalent to a conception of the conjunction of oppositions that prevent parties from reaching understanding. In fact, Cicero and Quintilian's general conception of stasis as the point around which arguments are settled matches Habermas' conception of validity claims as focal points in discourse. Cicero observed that "there are two kinds of (infinite) questions 'about any possible subject': one having to do with knowing, the other with action."[22] That is, arguers settle their disputes with reference to the validity claims regarding the truth or appropriateness of an utterance. Still, it may be asked, how are Habermas' validity claims the same as Cicero's and Quintilian's particular stases of conjecture, definition, quality and location?

[21] For a discussion of the concept of discourse, see Habermas, "Theories of Truth."

[22] Cicero, *Topica*, 21. 79-82, as quoted in Hultzén, p. 100.

These stases, it should be recalled, referred to propositions of fact uttered in the context of the courtroom. Within Habermas' framework, propositions of fact are assertions, "constative speech acts," that thematize the validity claim to truth. The first three stases refer primarily to securing the listener's understanding of the propositional content of a constative speech act. These stases are the presuppositions of reference and predication that must be mutually recognized if the speech act is to be accepted by the listener as true. "Is it?" refers to the existence presupposition. "What is it?" refers to the identifiability presupposition, and "What kind is it?" refers to the act of predication. When these presuppositions are called into question the truth claim of the proposition is contested. Since every speech act contains a propositional component, these presuppositions must always be understood and accepted by a listener, regardless of the type of proposition or speech act uttered.

What, then, has happened to the location, or procedural stasis? This stasis refers to the remaining felicity conditions of the assertion that have to do with the "rightness" or appropriateness of the assertion. Issues over the appropriateness of claims uttered in the highly institutionalized normative context of the courtroom are resolved through recourse to legal procedures. Thus it can be seen that the older conception of stasis can be fit rather neatly into our linguistic reformulation.

Similarly, the stock issues of a policy proposition can be linguistically interpreted. The policy proposition can be examined as a type of speech act class Searle terms directives. Directives (e.g., requests) presuppose various speech act-specific conditions, including the desire for H to do A, the belief that H would not do A in the absence of the request, the ability of H to do A, the willingness or obligation of H to do A, and the right of H to do A. These conditions can be recognized (crudely) as the stases around which analysis and strategy formulation over a policy proposition take place. The significant difference is that a linguistic interpretation reveals stases to be not merely conventional stages of analysis, but the constitutive features of the very *act* of proposing. Interpreting stases in this way allows the student of argument to investigate the forms argument takes in naturally occurring discourse.

A body of empirical support is accumulating which shows that stases are, in fact, the issues around which everyday interactants construct their arguments. Garvey, for example, has investigated children's abilities to respond to naturally occurring requests and concludes that speech act conditions provide not only a basis for children's understanding a speech act as a request but also are the bases for their refusing a request.[23] Garvey argues that propositional content and felicity conditions were "invoked in justifying, refusing and in repeating or paraphrasing a request, and they also provided a basis for the communication of indirect requests."[24] Labov and Fanshel and Jackson and Jacobs offer similar arguments for the operation of speech act conditions.[25]

Jackson and Jacobs' work, in particular, suggests that speech act conditions are the issues around which arguments and influence attempts are

[23] Catherine Garvey, "Requests and Responses in Children's Speech," *Journal of Child Language*, 2 (1975), 41-63.

[24] Garvey, p. 41.

[25] Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs, "The Organization of Argument in Natural Discourse," paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, 1978; Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "The Social Production of Influence," paper presented at the Central States Speech Association, 1979; and Labov and Fanshel.

organized in adult discourse. They are researching interpersonal influence processes through the examination of the rational properties of speech acts and the structural characteristics of conversation. Their empirical investigation of argument reveals that persons treat a delimited set of aspects of an utterance as arguable. The objects of argument sequences are aspects of an utterance's propositional content or are an utterance's illocutionary properties. Disagreement may and does ensue over these conditions because they are perceived by the hearer and speaker to be the relevant potential obstacles to understanding and acceptance. Thus conditions for the successful performance of a speech act serve as the issues or stases around which everyday interactants base their disagreements. Jackson and Jacobs have also studied how the structural properties of talk (e.g., adjacency pairs) constrain the formation of arguments in talk. They have been able to account for why the enthymeme is the basic argumentative form in conversation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is useful to note the general advantage of this perspective. Heretofore the doctrine of stasis has been conceived as a conventional scheme of analysis brought in from outside the communicative event and applied in the analysis of a proposition. The present analysis, by contrast, interprets stases as resident within the structure of the communicative act itself. Every communicative situation expresses linguistically four domains of reality: external reality, language, society and subjective reality. These domains of reality inherent in all speech situations give rise to four fundamental validity claims that underlie the flow of non-problematic communication. At the same time, since speakers express particular communicative intentions, any particular speech act thematizes a validity claim that enforces specific speech act-typical conditions. Thus the specific "stock issues" to be negotiated in any communicative event are a product of the structure of the event itself, and involve both universal context-invariant claims to validity and event specific conditions for the successful performance of a particular speech act. Hence where traditional analyses of stases have provided only a general discussion of the conventionalized nature of forensic and deliberative procedure, the present approach grounds the doctrine of stasis in the general constitutive conditions of communication and its specific forms. As such, a grounded generative framework is provided for developing analyses of the specific stases involved in any speech event.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF HABERMAS TO RHETORICAL VALIDITY

James A. Aune

According to Ray E. McKerrow, much recent work in the history of argument rules out "the consideration of validity criteria dependent on a sense of self-risk which transcends the process of objectification" and which "establish[es] a state of communion with the Other."[1] He contends that rational perusal of arguments and "restrained partisanship"[2] in no way make arguers "lovers," but simply indicate that the arguers are following a particular set of social conventions.[3] McKerrow's essay was concerned primarily with the work of Ehninger, Toulmin, and Perelman, all of whom adopt a definition of rhetorical validity which may be described as "pragmatic justification."[4] The purpose of the present essay is to examine Jürgen Habermas' discussion of the validity claims inherent in everyday conversation, and to determine whether or not his notions of universal pragmatics and the "ideal speech situation" are subject to the same indictments which McKerrow brings against other philosophers of argument. I will argue that (1) Habermas' perspective, like those of Ehninger, Toulmin, and Perelman, emphasizes the role of reason in argument. (2) However, instead of relying upon good will, traditional notions of the rational in a given field, or the universal audience, Habermas makes argumentative validity dependent upon the rationality of *society*. He therefore is able to transcend the concept of validity as adherence to social convention. (3) Despite the larger social concerns of Habermas' work he is subject to McKerrow's indictment that rationalistic validity criteria in no way insure the creation of fullness of personhood for partners in an argument. It is suggested that Habermas's inattention to symbolic action and to the problem of the partiality of argument (inattention shared by the other argumentation theorists discussed by McKerrow) accounts for the position which McKerrow seeks to criticize.

Universal Pragmatics and Argument

According to Habermas, the task of universal pragmatics "is to identify and reconstruct universal conditions of possible understanding."[5] Linguistic scholars since Chomsky have drawn a distinction between linguistic performance and linguistic competence. While performance refers to the actual use of language in concrete situations, competence refers to the ideal speaker-listener's knowledge of his or her language.[6] Using

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[1] Ray E. McKerrow, "Rhetorical Validity: An Analysis of Three Perspectives on the Justification of Rhetorical Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 141.

[2] The term is Douglas Ehninger's: "Argument as Method: Its Nature, Its Limitations, and Its Uses," *Speech Monographs*, 37 (1970), 109; McKerrow, p. 138.

[3] McKerrow, pp. 138-139.

[4] McKerrow, p. 135.

[5] Jürgen Habermas, "What Is Universal Pragmatics?" *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, tr. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 1.

[6] Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1965), pp. 3-4.

methods of rational reconstruction[7] the linguistic scholar is able to describe the phonetic, syntactic, and semantic features of sentences in universal terms, in order to understand what rules a "competent speaker must master in order to form grammatical sentences and to utter them in an acceptable way."[8] Linguistics is thus a *formal, reconstructive* science rather than a *deductive-nomological* one. It does not develop laws or law-like statements about observable events; rather, it seeks systematically to reconstruct the intuitive knowledge of competent subjects.[9]

Problems of rational speech and rational choice have been traditional concerns of argumentation theorists. Habermas' linguistic approach to argument provides a rigorous, scientific method of analysis which does not reduce argument to a determined product of society or individual psychology. The particular aspect of Habermas' universal pragmatics which is important for the study of argumentation is his analysis of the validity claims implicit in all communication. Whereas other communication theorists might view symbolic self-expression or the transmission of information as the primary basis of human interaction,[10] Habermas views *argument* as primary. He supports his view through a description of the "worlds" to which utterance refers, a classification of types of speech acts, and an analysis of the validity claims implicit in each type of speech act.

According to Habermas, language can be conceived as the "medium of interrelating three worlds; for every successful communicative action there exists a threefold relation between the utterance and (a) 'the external world' as the totality of existing states of affairs, (b) 'our social world' as the totality of all normatively regulated interpersonal relations that count as legitimate in a given society, and (c) 'a particular inner world' (of the speaker) as the totality of his intentional experiences."[11] Communicative action may be divided into four types of speech acts, in terms of which particular "world" is being discussed. Thomas McCarthy summarizes these four as follows:

> *communicatives* (e.g., say, express, speak, ask, mention), which express the pragmatic meaning of utterances qua utterances; *constatives* (e.g., state, assert, describe, explain), which explicate the meaning of statements qua statements; *representatives* (e.g., admit, confess, deny, conceal), which are used with propositional contexts containing intentional verbs (e.g., like, wish, want) to explicate the meaning of the self-representation of the speaker before the hearer; and *regulatives* (e.g., command, forbid, allow, warn), which explicate the meaning of the speaker/hearer's relationship to rules which can be followed or broken.[12]

Each type of speech act involves a particular kind of validity claim. In performing a constative speech act the speaker is offering implicitly to point back to the experiential source from which the speaker draws the certainty that his or her statement is true. In performing a regulative speech act the

[7] The term "rational reconstruction" comes from Hans Reichenbach, *Experience and Prediction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), pp. 5-7.

[8] Habermas, "What Is Universal Pragmatics?" p. 26.

[9] Habermas, "What Is Universal Pragmatics?" pp. 8-14.

[10] Cf. Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 3-50. One could characterize the work of Habermas as a continuation of Hegel's attempt to mediate between a romantic philosophy of language as self-expression and a scientific philosophy of language as objective communication of facts.

[11] Habermas, "What Is Universal Pragmatics?" pp. 66-68.

[12] Thomas A. McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," in Paul Connerton, ed., *Critical Sociology* (New York: Penguin, 1976), pp. 474-475; cf. Jürgen Habermas, "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence," *Inquiry*, 13 (1970), 360-375.

speaker implicitly offers to refer to the normative context which has given him or her the conviction of being right. In performing a representative speech act the speaker offers to prove trustworthy, either in the immediate case or by allowing the listener to check the consistency of his or her subsequent behavior.[13] In performing a communicative speech act the speaker simply undertakes the responsibility to be comprehensible.

In making the validity claims implicit in each type of speech act the speaker is allowing for the possibility of shifting the level of discussion, should any of the claims be challenged. In everyday interaction the claims usually are naively accepted. However, if the hearer calls one of the claims into question it is possible for the partners in the interaction to enter into what Habermas calls *discourse*. As McCarthy describes it, "discourse is that 'peculiarly unreal' form of communication in which the participants subject themselves to the 'unforced force of the better argument,' with the aim of coming to an agreement about the validity or invalidity of problematic claims."[14] Although discourse can be undertaken at any time by partners in dialogue, Habermas notes that discourse often is institutionalized in society. His examples of institutionalized discourse include classical Greek philosophy, which arose as a structured means of testing the validity of traditional mythical and religious claims; modern empirical science, which tests the validity claims of technical knowledge; and, particularly important, the "public sphere" in representative bourgeois democracy, in which the institutions of the press and parliament test the validity claims of practical knowledge[15].

Every time discourse is entered into, it is assumed that consensus is possible. Such consensus is possible only if certain structural requirements are fulfilled. These structural requirements are based upon the four validity claims of the typology of speech acts which Habermas develops in his universal pragmatics: (1) each speaker must have equal opportunity to initiate and perpetuate communication (engage in *communicative* speech acts); (2) each speaker must have an equal opportunity to employ *regulative* speech acts (oppose, permit, forbid), without having to obey one-sidedly binding norms; (3) each speaker must have an equal opporunity to employ *constative* speech acts, so that no propositional statements are immune from examination; (4) each speaker must have an equal opportunity to employ *representative* speech acts (be able to express feelings, attitudes).[16]

For Habermas, then, the ideal speech situation is neither something empirically observable nor a utopian construct, but rather a rational reconstruction of the suppositions which are present every time two people seriously engage in communication. Every time communication takes place the ideal speech situation is anticipated, and, in turn, the ideal speech situation serves as a standard by which any given act of communication can be judged.[17]

Rhetorical Validity

For Habermas, the ideal speech situation and the validity claims which are

[13] Habermas, "What Is Universal Pragmatics?" pp. 63-64.

[14] Thomas A. McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1978), p. 292.

[15] Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, tr. John Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), pp. 25-26.

[16] McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas*, pp. 306-307.

[17] McCarthy, "Translator's Introduction," in Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), p. xvii.

implicit in communicative action are based upon the assumption that the fundamental purpose of speech is the achievement of understanding. He describes, however, two other types of speech which derive from communicative action. The first is *strategic action*, that which is oriented purely to the actor's success. Strategic forms of speech include lying, misleading, or manipulating, and involve the suspension of the validity claim of truthfulness by the speaker. The second type of speech is *symbolic action*. Symbolic action includes actions such as a concert or dance, all of which are bound to a non-propositional system of expression and thus suspend the validity claim of truth.[18] Except for his discussion of the dramaturgical origins of the concept of crisis Habermas seldom discusses symbolic action in his theory of communication.[19] He is, however, concerned with strategic action as a type of distorted communication. Both ideology and neurotic disturbances have at their root the phenomenon of repression of and resistance to communication.[20] Both share the problem of partiality. Neurotic disturbances are relieved through self-reflection. Ideologies also disappear when their victims become conscious of the meanings which the ideologies seek to repress. What was once a private, partial, unconscious language is thus made, through self-reflection, into a public language.[21] Given the requirement of the ideal speech situation that each participant be able to use representative speech acts equally, it would seem that the permeability of private and public speech is an implicit need that also must be fulfilled for rational discourse to take place.[22]

Habermas' description of strategic action sounds suspiciously like a description of some forms of rhetoric, particularly those which are often dismissed under the title of "persuasive sophistry." Much contemporary rhetorical theory has attempted to address the problem of the immorality of "strategic action" by attempting to establish rational criteria for the evaluation of arguments. Ray E. McKerrow has summarized the rational criteria established by Toulmin, Ehninger, and Perelman: (1) The arguers must agree to "hear each other out," (2) the arguers must agree upon a standard of validity, and (3) "the arguers agree that, in the event one presents a stronger case, the other will acquiesce or at least recognize the weakness of his own position."[23]

The importance of McKerrow's essay lies in his perception of the inherent limitations of rhetorical validity as a construct:

> In the process of adhering to the preconditions for argument, I objectify the Other (my opponent), myself, *and* the standard of validity we choose. From this objectification, a cohesive relationship emerges which makes possible a rational deliberation of a dispute. By thus objectifying the Other, I degrade his Being, as well as my own. Instead of conferring personhood, I classify and label the other as my opponent in dialogue, thus denying the full potential of communion between us.[24]

McKerrow traces the assumptions of Ehninger, Toulmin, and Perelman back

[18] Habermas, "What Is Universal Pragmatics?" p. 41.

[19] Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 2.

[20] Habermas, "Systematically Distorted Communication," *Inquiry*, 13 (1970), 205-218.

[21] Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, tr. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 214-245.

[22] Alvin W. Gouldner summarizes the social requirements for the existence of Habermas' ideal speech situation as follows: 1) No violence, 2) Permeable boundaries between public and private speech, 3) Allowance of traditional symbols and rules of discourse to be made problematic, and 4) Insistence upon equal opportunities to speak. *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology* (New York: Seabury, 1976), p. 142.

[23] McKerrow, p. 140.

[24] McKerrow, pp. 140-141.

to a common emphasis upon social convention. It is precisely social convention as a standard which McKerrow seeks to attack: "Within the realm of objective transmission, argument is akin to other social relationships which I might experience. I may treat my opponent, once the rules or preconditions have been agreed to, much as I treat my banker or the mechanic who works on my car."[25]

It is instructive that McKerrow compares the rules for valid argumentation with those governing communication with one's banker or one's mechanic. It would appear initially that Habermas' concept of the ideal speech situation overcomes McKerrow's indictments precisely because Habermas grounds communicative action in a social context. Neither Toulmin, Ehninger, nor Perelman seem concerned with the problems of the distortions which ideology or neurosis create in actual argumentation. Habermas' criteria suggest that barriers to validity lie in the structure of the arguers' society, and that neither adherence to logical form nor to rhetorical validity, but rather political action, will provide the possibility of true speech. No argument about practical questions is capable of being valid in capitalist society. The capitalist order is based upon private appropriation of public wealth. In other words, interests that should be treated as generalizable are suppressed and treated as particular:

> As a consequence, political decisions that reflect the existing organizational principle of society ipso facto do not admit of rational consensus. They could not be justified in a general and unrestricted discussion of what, in the light of present and possible circumstances, is in the best interests of all affected by them. Hence the stability of the capitalist social formation depends on the continued effectiveness of legitimations that could not withstand discursive examination. The problem, in short, is how to distribute socially produced wealth inequitably and yet legitimately.[26]

The "peculiarly unreal" character of rational discourse is due to the fact that the "reality" of contemporary political argument is based upon the repression of the interests of the public as a whole. The problem with much previous analysis of argument has been a lack of precision in describing the *worlds* to which argument refers. The "internal," "external," and "social" worlds, concerning which all speech acts make representative claims, are parts of a dialectical whole which is capable of *self-contradiction*. Those who adhere to a standard of pragmatic justification ignore the social context in which a given utterance may be grounded; Habermas' theory demonstrates that a given utterance may be rational in itself but may be contradicted and defeated by the irrational social world in which it is grounded.[27] Like McKerrow, Habermas seeks to enlarge the context of argument beyond the conventions of a contradictory or impersonal social structure.

Are Arguers Then Lovers?

Habermas in part answers McKerrow's indictment of argumentation theory by locating fuller communion with the Other in the ideals of a rational society. It seems reasonable, however, to suggest that "lovers" would balk at the notion

25 McKerrow, p. 141.

26 McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas*, p. 358; cf. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 23.

27 Herbert Marcuse's compelling analysis of the co-optation of progressive movements by the system in which they are embedded is an earlier version of the dialectical theory of communication which Habermas employs. Cf. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in *Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965), pp. 83-84. Habermas' description of the three worlds to which communication may refer seems related to Marcuse's account of linguistic meaning in *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 196-197.

that Habermas' version of the ideal speech situation is "ideal." A lover, one suspects, would view a dance as a "more ideal" form of communicative action than a leaderless seminar discussion. (In a dance, at any rate, someone must lead.) There are three reasons that Habermas' concept cannot fulfill McKerrow's request for the consideration of validity criteria based upon interpersonal communion.

The first has to do with McKerrow's framing of his argument. He calls the process of adhering to preconditions of argument an objectification of the Other *and* of the common standard of validity. McKerrow's reliance upon Marcel's existentialist philosophy requires him to give "objectification" unnecessarily bad connotations. The Hegelian-Marxian tradition, however, draws an important distinction between *obejctification* and *alienation*. According to Hegel and (at least) to the early Marx, man is an objectifying being. In creating a world of objects by practical activity, human beings demonstrate the uniqueness of their species: "Labour, understood in this way, is the specifically human 'affirmation of being' in which human existence is realized and confirmed."[28] For Marx, objective being is sensuous being. Alienation, however, occurs when three related phenomena occur in capitalist society: (1) Workers are divorced from the objective product of their work (they cannot own what they have made); (2) their work-activity itself does not belong to them, but to the capitalist to whom their labor-power has been sold; (3) the workers are alienated from the people who buy their products but who nevertheless stand in an unconscious social relationship to the workers.[29] It seems possible, even if one does not accept Marx's particular formulation of the problem of alienation, that he draws an important distinction which McKerrow is unable to make: Human creative activity is essentially objectification. Only when such activity becomes separated from conscious decision making by the human actor does alienation occur. Full communion with the Other requires consensus both on social standards for conducting an argument and on the need for reflection upon the ideological and neurotic distortions which each partner in argument brings to the situation. If the problem of objectification is reframed philosophically it appears that Habermas is capable of meeting McKerrow's indictment.

A more important problem with Habermas' position lies in his notion that symbolic action is somehow "parasitic" upon communicative action. Habermas' universal pragmatics neglects the whole tradition of contemporary philosophy of language which indicates that, rather than being parasitic, poetic and metaphorical processes are humanity's chief means of generating new meanings and new ways of looking at the world. As Paul N. Campbell notes, poetry and metaphor are both logically and "symbologically" prior to other uses of language.[30] James M. Edie has argued for the existence of *necessary metaphors*, noting that most words for philosophical concepts were originally metaphors for human bodily action or for the physically experienced world.[31] It is entirely

[28] Herbert Marcuse, "The Foundation of Historical Materialism," *Studies in Critical Philosophy*, tr. Joris de Bres (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 11.

[29] Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," *Early Writings*, tr. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (New York: Vintage, 1975), pp. 326ff.

[30] Paul Newell Campbell, "A Rhetorical View of Locutionary, Illocutionary, and Perlocutionary Acts," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (October 1973), 284-296.

[31] James M. Edie, *Speaking and Meaning: The Phenomenology of Language* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp. 151-194.

possible that one reason for the fact that most theorists of argumentation fall short of validity criteria based upon communion with an Other lies in their inattention to the poetic dimension of language.

A final problem with Habermas' position lies in the inability of most communication to transcend its own partiality. Neither Habermas nor McKerrow seems to be able to bridge the gap between actual communication and ideal communication. As Gouldner notes, the only politics which seems consistent with Habermas' ideal speech situation is that of the encounter-group or sensitivity-training movement.[32] *Real* politics seems to require, at some point, killing. At least, for Gouldner, "Violence plainly indicates that some things are not open to discussion—it marks the limits."[33] A total commitment to ideal standards of communication ignores the fact that rhetorical progress occurs only through the partiality of individual and collective passion. As Hegel notes, "The particular interest of passion is therefore inseparable from the activity of the universal: for it is from the particular and determinate and from its negation, that the universal results." Only particular interests can stir the individual to the passion of historical struggle.[34]

Habermas appears to have incorporated and gone beyond Gouldner's objections in the more recent attempt at a reconstruction of historical materialism. In keeping with both the dialectical emphasis upon partiality and the concern to relate individual speech acts to the social whole, Habermas locates rationality in the learning capacity of society at a given stage of historical development.[35] Like Marcuse's description of the concrete conditions for a "transcendent project,"[36] Habermas links possibilities for rational argument and political action with the technical and communicative learning capacity of society. Rational argument, for Habermas as well as for Marx, always is embedded in a system of forces (technical development) and relations (communicative patterns) of production.[37] Human beings learn in both the technical and communicative dimensions of life. The immanent standards of rationality for a primitive society are different from those of advanced industrial society, although both societies may be judged in terms of their relationship to the ideal speech situation. To return to a previous example, one can use the notion of learning capacity as a standard for judging economic arguments in contemporary society. If one can establish a rational consensus that advanced industrial societies are capable of having political democracy it is contradictory to consider them incapable of having economic democracy as well.

The notion of learning capacity, however, does not seem to establish criteria for choosing between violence and persuasion in the given case. Interestingly enough, Ehninger and Perelman, the representatives of the rhetorical tradition, provide some implicit standards for the limitation of discussion. Since true argument is possible only between persons of good will, the absence of good will on the part of a speaker is a clear, empirical standard for the abandonment of argument. Thomas B. Farrell persuasively extends Habermas' criteria in

[32] Gouldner, p. 147.
[33] Gouldner, p. 143.
[34] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, cited in Herbert Marcuse, "On Hedonism," *Negations*, tr. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 196.
[35] Jürgen Habermas, "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism," *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, pp. 130-177.
[36] Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, p. 220.
[37] Habermas, "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism," pp. 138-148.

focusing upon the complicity of the audience in argumentative development. One reason it is impossible to argue with an Adolf Hitler, for example, is his refusal to address appropriate historical audiences.[38] In fact, Farrell's use of Dewey's and Burke's concept of form as the ordering of the expectations of an audience suggests a possible solution of the problem of Habermas' neglect of the aesthetic dimension of human speech.[39]

Dewey, Burke, and other theorists of symbolic action have demonstrated the importance of form in organizing human cognitions. Perhaps if Habermas attended to the forms in which validity claims are given to consciousness—both in terms of personal aesthetic expression and of socially conventional communication—he could advance his theory of argument within the framework of his existing theory. The ability of poetic to articulate true personhood and the ability of rhetoric to embody the ideals of true personhood in a given social context could be viewed as two sides of a unified *techne* of rational speech.

[38] Thomas B. Farrell, "Validity and Rationality: The Rhetorical Constituents of Argumentative Form," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 143-145.

[39] Farrell, p. 144.

ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF RATIONALITY: TOULMIN, HABERMAS, AND THE *A PRIORI* OF REASON

Brant R. Burleson

Given argumentation scholars' enthusiastic reception of Stephen Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument*,[1] it is somewhat surprising that his major work, *Human Understanding*, has not been accorded equal recognition.[2] Written as an explicit elaboration and systematic development of themes initially stated in his earlier work, *Human Understanding* offers a major reformulation of the concepts of reason, logic, and argumentation.[3] Indeed, Toulmin promises "a comprehensive reappraisal of our working ideas about rationality."[4] Volume I of *Human Understanding*, the only volume of a projected trilogy published to date, does much to make good on this promise. However, certain fundamental problems remain in Toulmin's analysis—problems that have the potential of undermining his overall project. The most severe of the problems centers on Toulmin's contentions regarding the manner in which our ideas of rationality are themselves to be rationally grounded. Unfortunately, Toulmin's orientation to this problem is such that its solution *within the confines of the system articulated by Toulmin* is all but impossible.

However, providing an epistemologically secure foundation for our concepts of rationality is not, in principle, an insoluble problem. This essay proposes such a foundation through reinterpreting and integrating certain of Toulmin's insights with those of the German critical theorist, Jürgen Habermas. Toulmin's contributions, when coupled with features of Habermas' analysis of communication, provide not only a grounded theory of rationality containing both substantive and formal components, but also a framework for identifying and critiquing forms of irrationality. To this end, part one of this essay presents a brief synopsis of *Human Understanding*, highlighting some central conceptual problems therein. The second part of the essay outlines portions of Habermas' "comprehensive theory of communicative competence," detailing the notion of rationality uncovered by this theory. Part three articulates a concept of rationality based on an integration of Habermas' and Toulmin's work.

Toulmin and Rationality

In volume one of *Human Understanding* Toulmin analyzes the collective use and evolution of concepts. Elaborating his attack on the notion of "deductive inference" initiated in *The Uses of Argument*,[5] Toulmin here argues that pre-

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[1] Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958).

[2] (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

[3] Indeed, in the preface to *Human Understanding* Toulmin comments that the "central thesis of the present volume was first presented in my earlier book, *The Uses of Argument* (1958). The work I have done on the development of scientific thought and related topics during the subsequent decade makes it possible to expound it here at greater length and in a historical frame" (p. vii).

[4] Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, p. vii.

[5] Toulmin's attack on the notion of "deductive inference" is most clearly developed in his

vious treatments of human rationality have erred either on the side of absolutism or relativism. That is, most philosophical discussions of rationality have either assumed (with Plato, Descartes, Kant, and Frege) the necessity of upholding some universal *a priori* Truth, First Principle, or demarcation criterion as the basis for rational judgments, or have assumed (with Collingwood and Kuhn) that the choice of rational principles across historical and cultural milieus is relative, and hence arbitrary.[6] Neither position, according to Toulmin, enables its adherents to account for the rationality of conceptual change. Absolutist positions cannot explain reasoned *disagreement* regarding either the choice of First Principles or conclusions deduced from such principles, while relativism cannot explain reasoned *agreement* about conclusions reached across historical and cultural milieus. Moreover, Toulmin argues that neither position is reflexive; that is, neither position can account for its "rationality" within its own framework. The absolutist cannot call upon another First Principle to justify his initial First Principle without falling into an infinite regress, nor can he supply a First Principle to secure the status of the doctrine of First Principles. On the other hand, the relativist is in the peculiar (and self-contradictory) position of arguing that his doctrine is somehow above the relativity of judgments he asserts exist in all other domains.[7]

More important, Toulmin persuasively argues that both the absolutist and relativist stances are guilty of equating "rationality" with the formal "logicality" of a propositional system; that is, both positions err in assuming that persons demonstrate their rationality only by adhering to the principles of a formal, geometric logic of deduction and entailment. In assuming that rationality is defined by speaking in conformity with the rules of an abstract formal calculus, both absolutism and relativism endorse a theory of rationality that cannot be justified by appeal to absolutist, relativist, or formal-logical principles.[8]

In place of a formal logic of deduction and entailment, Toulmin offers a "populational approach" wherein rationality is demonstrated by adapting one's concepts to the needs of an "intellectual ecology." Relying heavily on a Darwinian interpretation of evolution, Toulmin argues that the appearance and perpetuation of conceptual innovations within intellectual disciplines depend upon processes of variation and selection.[9] Further, the dual processes of con-

critique of analytic arguments; see *The Uses of Argument*, pp. 123-141.

[6] Toulmin's criticism of Kuhn's influential work (Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970]) is particularly trenchant; see *Human Understanding*, pp. 98-117. These criticisms deserve the attention of speech communication scholars given Kuhn's popularity in our discipline.

[7] These criticisms of absolutism and relativism, although well argued, are not unique to Toulmin. See, for example, Richard J. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976); Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method: A Positive Critique of Interpretative Sociologies* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); and the essays contained in Frederick Suppe (ed.), *The Structure of Scientific Theories* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1974).

[8] Again, Toulmin's critique of formal systems as the foundation of rationality is not novel. See Jesse G. Delia, "The Logic Fallacy, Cognitive Theory, and the Enthymeme: A Search for the Foundations of Reasoned Discourse," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 140-148; Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Toward a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); and the essays in Suppe. Criticisms of Toulmin's view on this matter can be found in Joseph L. Cowan, "*The Uses of Argument*—An Apology for Logic," *Mind*, 73 (1964), 27-45; and Dale Hample, "The Toulmin Model and the Syllogism," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (1977), 1-9.

[9] Toulmin's concepts of an intellectual ecology and discipline are quite comparable with the idea of "field" developed in *The Uses of Argument* (see pp. 8-14). The terms will be used interchangeably throughout this essay.

ceptual variation and selection are affected by a host of reasons and causes, that is, by both the internal justifications provided by the practitioners of a discipline and by the influence of extra-disciplinary economic, political, and historical factors. The ideals of a discipline (e.g., explanation in science, justice in law, efficiency in technologies) conjoined with that discipline's core of unresolved problems serve to order the processes of conceptual innovation and selection. A discipline's unanswered questions provide the immediate "ecological niche" for conceptual variation and selection, while the discipline's much more stable ideals or goals provide a broader environmental continuity to the evolutionary process.[10]

Because thriving disciplines inevitably face unresolved problems requiring innovative solutions, Toulmin argues that "a man demonstrates his rationality, not by a commitment to fixed ideas, stereotyped procedures, or immutable concepts, but by the manner in which and the occasions on which, he changes those ideas, procedures, and concepts."[11] That is, rationality is demonstrated, not by conforming to the abstract geometrical formalism of a propositional calculus, but by selecting and utilizing concepts that are the most "adaptive" in meeting the relevant demands of a field. Within a discipline, the selection and implementation of a concept is rational to the extent that it reflects a concern with immediate problems and respects "the 'basic tasks' or 'fundamental goals' which determine the nature of the problem-situations in any discipline. . . ."[12]

Significantly, Toulmin emphasizes that the selection and implementation of concepts, strategies, and procedures within a discipline is a *social* process. That is, choice among concepts, particularly during periods of major innovation, turns on the quality of arguments advanced by disciplinary practitioners regarding a concept's immediate utility and its consistency with the discipline's basic tasks or fundamental goals. Because the various disciplines or fields of human activity necessarily articulate their own substantive standards for testing the merits of arguments, the rational assessment of an argument is always a discipline- or field-dependent matter; instead of a single obdurant *Logic*, there is a profusion of "working logics."[13] The community of practitioners in a discipline thus evaluates the merits of an argument according to how well it conforms with the discipline's ideals or goals and aids in resolving the discipline's set of unanswered questions. Ultimately, then, the "goodness" of an argument (i.e., the truth or validity of a claim) is determined by the consensual evaluation of a community of practitioners acting in accord with their interpretation of the discipline's basic tasks.

As can be seen, Toulmin's analysis of the rationality of conceptual change is anchored, in part, by notions of disciplinary "basic tasks" or "fundamental goals." Though giving rise to an understanding of the rational justification of claims that dispenses with adherence to a formal propositional system, reliance on notions such as "basic tasks" pro-

[10] Some have criticized Toulmin's use of the evolutionary metaphor because it fails to capture all essential aspects of Darwin's theory; e.g., see L. Jonathan Cohen, "Is the Progress of Science Evolutionary?" *British Journal of the Philosophy of Science*, 24 (1973), 41-61. However, the extent to which Toulmin's conception of the process of conceptual change parallels the process of biological evolution seems a trivial matter, since he only uses the concept of evolution as a metaphor to illuminate the focal phenomenon of *conceptual* change.

[11] *Human Understanding*, p. x.

[12] *Human Understanding*, p. 495.

[13] The concepts of working logic and field-dependence were originally developed by Toulmin in *The Uses of Argument* (see chapter 4).

duces other problems—problems which Toulmin readily recognizes. As he states:

> For suppose that we are asked, *from what standpoint* we are deciding what exactly should count as the defining goals of scientific understanding "in general," or alternatively as a legal system "properly so called." What kind of answer can we then give? Have we not simply put ourselves straight back into the same old trap: of being forced to choose, either, a Popperian reliance on arbitrary, external "demarcation-criteria," or else a thorough-going empiricism which lands us inescapably in a renewed relativism?[14]

Apparently, one must either employ an *a priori* concept of, e.g., science or law, in which case absolutism has been resurrected, or utilize an *a posteriori* concept of, e.g., science or law, a decision raising the problems of relativism.

Toulmin contends that "we need no longer accept either of these alternatives," and that his argument is at such a level that "the very attempt to distinguish sharply between the *a priori* and *a posteriori* is itself a source of mere confusion."[15] Be that as it may, it is not clear that Toulmin's solution is any less confusing. He contends that an *a priori* conception of rationality is viable "only by assuming that some unchanging 'rational framework' of discussion could be identified, capable of serving as a permanent starting-point of criticism."[16] Rejecting any such "antihistorical" assumption, Toulmin arrives at his own "impartial standpoint of rational judgment" by considering "all available insights into the empirical matrix within which understanding has to be sought."[17] Thus, substantive conceptions of what constitute science, law, technology—and perhaps even rationality itself—are supposedly arrived at "in the light of the empirical record, both about the goals which the men of different mileus have set themselves, in their own cultivation of those rational enterprises, and about the kinds of success they in fact achieved in pursuit of those goals."[18] Summarizing his criterion of rationality, Toulmin states:

> . . . there is one basis, and one alone, on which our judgments of "rationality" and conceptual "merit" can truly be impartial. This is one that takes into account the experience which men have accumulated when dealing with the relevant aspects of human life—explanatory or judicial, medical or technological—in *all* cultures and historical periods.[19]

Important problems remain in this formulation. For example, although Toulmin claims that "this standpoint of judgment avoids the fallacies that come from allowing special authority to the judgments of any one milieu,"[20] it is not clear just *how* such bias is avoided. In fact, it might be argued that relativism is once again making its presence felt. For at least one milieu must retain the "special authority" to judge what counts as acceptable science, law, medicine, and so on. This milieu is the present generation of disciplinary practitioners who, as Toulmin has so admirably shown, must share a collective conception of their field if fruitful work is to proceed. But as Toulmin himself notes, "by allowing each separate culture and epoch to decide, by its own standards, what properly counts as 'scientific understanding,' (or 'technical efficiency,' or 'justice') we plunge ourselves back into relativism."[21]

Toulmin, however, believes his analysis avoids this relapse into relativism since he argues that even decisions regarding the fundamental nature and

14 *Human Understanding*, pp. 495-496.
15 *Human Understanding*, p. 499.
16 *Human Understanding*, p. 499.
17 *Human Understanding*, p. 499.
18 *Human Understanding*, p. 498.
19 *Human Understanding*, p. 500.
20 *Human Understanding*, p. 500.
21 *Human Understanding*, p. 496.

basic tasks of disciplines "are made for *substantive* reasons, and are continually open to correction *in the light of experience*."[22] That is, Toulmin argues that changes in disciplinary goals or ideals (or, for that matter, changes in any concept) are rationally legitimate only when defensible by good reasons, reasons that are presumably of sufficient force to produce a consensual agreement regarding the advocated change within the community of disciplinary practitioners.[23] Such an agreement would be a *warranted consensus*, a consensual decision attained on the basis of good reasons. Toulmin's notion that changes in concepts are legitimated by good reasons is consistent with his rational imperative; relativism is avoided because there is always a substantive basis for conceptual change.

Because consensual changes in concepts are rationally legitimate only when the product of a warranted consensus, the notion of a warranted consensus becomes a crucial—though only an implicitly recognized—element in Toulmin's case for the rationality of conceptual change. It is thus imperative to know what conditions must be met for a consensual decision to be awarded the status of "warranted." Obviously, one cannot make the decision of what defines a warranted consensus *itself* a matter for consensual judgment; this is to be caught in the throes of an infinite regress. Clearly, there is need for explicit, universal characterization of the principles or procedures that define a consensus as warranted.

Although Toulmin is reluctant to posit such a universal principle or set of procedures, his declared "impartial standpoint of rational judgment" bears no small resemblance to such an *a priori;* for him, the "burden" of rationality "consists in the fundamental obligation to continue reappraising our strategies in the light of fresh experience."[24] This implies that warranted consensual decisions are achieved only under conditions where the community of disciplinary practitioners "takes into account the experience which men have accumulated when dealing with the relevant aspects of human life . . . in *all* cultures and historical periods."[25] Such a formal principle provides a very attractive characterization of the conditions necessary for the production of a warranted consensus. But a very severe, and perhaps insurmountable, difficulty for Toulmin arises from the question of how this principle is *itself* secured epistemologically: Why is the essence of rationality captured by this principle and not some other? How is this conception of rationality itself to be rationally grounded? By Toulmin's and the principle's own logic (or "rationality") mustn't this principle also remain open to question? Might we not find it necessary to modify or even discard this mandate "in the light of fresh experience"? Following Toulmin, then, we are forced to dance on the horns of a dilemma: either his rational imperative is itself subject to change, in which case it (and, for that matter, any other principle) cannot secure the warrantability or "rationality" of a consensus, or this imperative is an *a priori* absolute principle that, *for Toulmin,* is itself beyond rational justification.[26] Nor will it do

[22] *Human Understanding*, p. 497.

[23] The doctrine of "good reasons" has also been developed by several rhetorical theorists as a basis for establishing the epistemic function of rhetoric. For example, see Walter R. Fisher, "Toward a Logic of Good Reasons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 376-384; and Karl R. Wallace, "The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 49 (1963), 239-249.

[24] *Human Understanding*, p. 503.

[25] *Human Understanding*, p. 500.

[26] Toulmin's clear rejection, not only of the *a priori* status of formal logic, but of *all a*

simply to assert that Toulmin's rational imperative is the *meaning* of rationality, for this is to commit the same crime for which Toulmin rightly indicts Strawson.[27] Because Toulmin does not present an adequate defense of his "impartial standpoint of rational judgment," it appears that he fails to escape the very arbitrariness he locates at the heart of absolutist and relativist positions.

Despite this specific failure, Toulmin's analyses of rationality and the processes of conceptual change represent significant achievements. In demonstrating that the rationality of various human enterprises is not essentially dependent on conformity with abstract logical formalism, Toulmin has legitimated and furthered the way for development and analysis of functional "working logics." In stressing the need for practical, relevant standards of judgment, he has reinvigorated philosophical speculation with the concerns of everyday life. And in treating conceptual change as an evolutionary process occurring within an intellectual ecology, he has shed new light on our understanding of science, law, technology, and other domains of human activity.

Moreover, in fairness to Toulmin, it should be noted that the criticisms of *Human Understanding* developed above are largely concerned with issues addressed in the last chapter of volume one, and Toulmin has promised much more detailed discussion of these issues in the forthcoming volumes of the trilogy. At present, however, significant problems remain in his analysis. For example, although Toulmin recognizes that the validity of a claim (regarding either a particular concept or general conceptions of disciplinary basic tasks) is ultimately established by community-produced consensual decisions, he only implicitly recognizes the crucial difference between warranted and unwarranted consensually achieved decisions. Toulmin does not clearly differentiate between these distinct types of consensus, and fails to pursue adequately the epistemic implications of the decision making process itself. Nor does Toulmin systematically explore the precise characteristics that distinguish a warranted from an unwarranted consensus. But since rational changes in concepts occur only when an achieved consensual decision is based on substantive or "good" reasons, a full understanding of rational conceptual change requires formal characterization of either a "good reason" or a "warranted consensus." Unfortunately, Toulmin does little to inform us about the general nature of either of these concepts. Rather, he leaves us with simply an asserted "impartial standpoint of rational judgment," which only implicitly differentiates between warranted and unwarranted consensual decisions.

In addition, there is an even more significant problem regarding this impartial standpoint of rational judgment. As argued above, Toulmin leaves the epistemic status of his rational imperative unexamined and unestablished. Because adequate grounding for the asserted rational imperative is not provided, Toulmin's position inevitably slips toward relativism—a sophisticated form of relativism, to be sure, but relativism nonetheless. Further, as long as Toulmin remains intent on emphasizing the inevitability of conceptual change and insists on the historicity of *all* concepts, he will be incapable of escaping from relativism. Although Toulmin's avoidance of *a priori* principles and "final groundings" is generally commendable, such an attitude does not

priori concepts is clearly illustrated in his critique of Kant, Piaget, Chomsky, and other theorists making use of universals or invariants. See *Human Understanding*, chapter 7.

[27] *Human Understanding*, pp. 425-428.

serve him well at the level of analysis where general principles of rationality are formulated. Some means must be found of securing his rational imperative or his entire project is in danger of collapsing. Such securing requires the identification of a universal feature of human experience, a feature which will mandate acceptance of the rational imperative. This is essentially the move made by the German philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, who articulates a scheme of rationality complementary to Toulmin's but grounds his principles in an analysis of human communication.

Habermas and Rationality

Called "the most influential thinker in Germany today,"[28] Habermas is rapidly becoming known and respected by Anglo-American philosophers, political theorists, sociologists, linguists, and speech communication scholars. Truly comprehensive in scope, Habermas' work has particularly important implications for our understandings of rhetoric, communication, criticism, rationality, and argumentation. Because the general program of Habermas' work has been reviewed elsewhere,[29] only those aspects of his writings germane to the analysis of rationality and argumentation will be treated here.

While Toulmin's conception of rationality grows out of an analysis of conceptual change processes occurring at the macro-institutional level of disciplines, Habermas' analysis focuses on rational processes as they are displayed at the micro-level of individual interaction episodes. Habermas' thesis is that the ability to engage in everyday communicative interaction presupposes the existence of an inherent set of rational standards, and that such standards are themselves the constitutive conditions for all social life.

Habermas' analysis of communication is built on the assumption that interactants make a variety of "validity claims" during the course of ordinary, non-problematic interaction. These normally only implicit claims to validity include intelligibility, truth, truthfulness or sincerity, and appropriateness.[30] That is, Habermas argues that the possibility of non-problematic communication (a level of communication he terms "communicative action") requires that interactants mutually and reciprocally assume that the other is uttering intelligible sentences, speaking the truth, expressing himself sincerely, and acting appropriately with respect to relevant social norms. Thus, speech acts count as successful utterances "only under the assumption that the speaker credibly raises [the] four validity claims simultaneously";[31] unless these four claims are as-

[28] Thomas McCarthy, trans., *Legitimation Crisis*, by Jürgen Habermas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), p. vii.

[29] The most complete review of Habermas' work published to date is Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1978). Other useful introductions to Habermas include Anthony Giddens, "Habermas' Social and Political Theory," *American Journal of Sociology*, 83 (1977), 198-212; Kai Nielsen, "Some Theses in Search of an Argument: Reflections on Habermas," *Phi Kappa Phi Journal National Forum*, 69 (Winter 1979), 27-31; Trent Schroyer, *The Critique of Domination: The Origins and Development of Critical Theory* (New York: G. Braziller, 1973), chapter 4; Julius Sensat, Jr., *Habermas and Marxism: An Appraisal* (Beverly Hills, Ca.: Sage Publications, 1979), chapters 2-3; and Bernstein, chapter 4. Specific issues pertaining to Habermas' analysis of communication and argumentation are treated in T. A. McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," *Philosophy of Social Science*, 3 (1973), 135-156; and Brant R. Burleson and Susan L. Kline, "Habermas' Theory of Communication: A Critical Explication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, in press.

[30] The four types of validity claims are based on Habermas' analysis of the pragmatics of speech situations. Hence, this classification system is not arbitrary; see Jürgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. Thomas A. McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), chapter 1.

[31] Jürgen Habermas, "Some Distinctions in

sumed to be valid, or at least are assumed capable of being validated, there is no basis for the creation of an intersubjective state. The assumed validity of the four claims creates a "background consensus" through which communication can proceed.

Significantly, the four validity claims not only underlie the flow of unimpeded communicative action, they also form the very foundations of human rationality. Habermas states that "in these validity claims communication theory can locate a gentle but obstinate, a never silent but seldom redeemed claim to reason, a claim that must be recognized de facto whenever and wherever there is to be consensual action."[32] Just how these usually implicit claims form the basis of rationality can best be seen by examining instances where the validity of one or more of the claims is directly challenged or otherwise rendered problematic.

On occasions when one or more of the validity claims is called into question the continuation of communicative action is jeopardized. Measures must be taken by the parties to restore the previous background consensus or create a new one. Depending on which validity claim is called into question, a number of issues may be raised by communicators. If the intelligibility of an utterance becomes problematic, we explicate the sense of the utterance through *communicative* speech acts (speech acts designed to enhance the comprehensibility of the utterance). If the truth of the propositional content of the utterance is problematic, we explain the validity of the proposition through *constative* speech acts (i.e., assertions, descriptions, etc.). When the rightness of a rule underlying the claim to normative appropriateness is questioned, we justify this rule through *regulative* speech acts (speech acts which explicate the meaning of our relations to rules). Finally, when the truthfulness or sincerity of our partner (conveyed through *representative* speech acts that explicate one's self-representation) is doubted, we seek the testimony of a third party or compare a speaker's utterances with his past and present actions.[33]

As can be seen, the validity of claims to both intelligibility and truthfulness is redeemed through further communicative action; intelligibility is restored through negotiation concerning linguistic usage and truthfulness is established through interaction in which the other's actions are compared with his statements. In contrast, the validity of problematic claims to truth and normative appropriateness can only be determined by raising communication to the level Habermas terms "discourse."

Discourse is a mode of communication in which claims to truth and normative appropriateness are examined by interactants and either accepted or rejected on the basis of arguments. Habermas describes the speech situation of discourse as one which:

> . . . requires the virtualization of constraints on action. This is intended to render inoperative all motives except solely that of a cooperative readiness to arrive at an understanding, and further requires that questions of validity be separated from those of genesis. Discourse thereby renders possible the virtualization of claims to validity; this consists in our announcing with respect to the objects of communicative action (things and events, persons and utterances) a reservation concerning their existence and con-

Universal Pragmatics: A Working Paper," *Theory and Society*, 3 (1976), 159.

[32] Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, p. 97.

[33] Habermas presents a detailed analysis of the relation between types of validity claims and the associated classes of speech acts in "Some Distinctions in Universal Pragmatics" and *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, chapter 1. Also, see Jürgen Habermas, "Theories of Truth," trans. Richard Grabau (unpublished manuscript, Purdue University), p. 8.

ceiving of facts as well as of norms from the viewpoint of *possible* existence.[34]

In other words, discourse is a form of communication which has the sole purpose of critically assessing the merit of claims to truth and appropriateness. Obviously, before discourse can proceed, the problematic claims must be regarded as tentative hypotheses whose establishment or rejection is the outcome of discourse. Further, the motivational atmosphere of discourse must be "pure"; that is, participants must be motivated only by an openminded desire to assess the truth or correctness of certain claims, and not by any dogmatic or manipulative motives. Discourse ceases only when participants achieve a mutually satisfactory consensus regarding the validity of the contested claim.

Central to Habermas' theory of communication is the assumption that problematic truth claims and claims to appropriateness can be redeemed in discourse. This notion is in turn built on the assumption that people know why they hold the beliefs and norms they do, and are able to provide explanations and justifications for them if called upon to do so. This "supposition of mutual accountability" (i.e., the ability to provide good reasons or arguments for one's position) is an intrinsic feature of non-problematic communication. That is, speech at the level of communicative action is possible only because we believe that persons, if called upon to do so, can provide rational accounts for their claims. Thus, the possibility of communicators achieving a consensual resolution of differences in discourse is implied in the very idea of a competent speaker.[35]

Like Toulmin, then, Habermas believes that the truth or validity of a claim is determined through a consensual decision reached by a community of disciplinary practitioners. But Habermas also recognizes that consensual decisions can be the products of constraints, domination, and ideologies as well as good reasons. Because the process of reaching a consensual decision may be affected by a host of such inappropriate influences, Habermas argues that "if we were to understand by 'consensus' any agreement that chances to come into being, it manifestly could not serve as a criterion of truth."[36] That is, since the unrefined notion of a simple consensus will legitimate both "real" and distorted, constrained, and ideologically influenced agreements, the act of justifying a claim must be a normative concept; Habermas explicitly asserts that the only consensus to which one should accede is a *warranted consensus*. As he indicates, "the meaning of truth is not in the fact that consensus has been reached, but rather that at all times and places, if only we enter into discourse, a consensus can be arrived at under conditions which show the consensus to be warranted. Truth means 'warranted assertability.' "[37]

Thus far, Habermas has demonstrated that the possibility of human communication presupposes at least some idea of rationality and that rational decisions are those based on a warranted consensus. These achievements, although significant, represent only extensions and

[34] Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. John Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), pp. 18-19.

[35] Habermas realizes that the supposition of mutual accountability is counterfactual in many cases. However, he develops a theory of "systematically distorted communication" which dissolves the problems associated with the counterfactual nature of this supposition. See Jürgen Habermas, "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence," in *Recent Sociology, No. 2: Patterns of Communicative Behavior*, ed. Hans Peter Dreitzel (New York: Macmillan, 1970).

[36] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 22.

[37] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 22.

elaborations of the framework articulated by Toulmin. Habermas, however, goes on to provide an analysis of the formal principles characterizing a warranted consensus, and thereby avoids a major problem afflicting Toulmin's work. Habermas derives these principles by characterizing the "force of the better argument" through what he terms the "formal properties of discourse," that is, through an analysis of what the rational defense of a claim must involve.

Assuming that the validity of a claim is rationally established solely on the merits of arguments presented in discourse, Habermas, following Toulmin, argues that the testing of most significant validity claims proceeds through the exchange of "substantial arguments." Since substantial arguments are not reducible to purely deductive inferences, the formal modalities of logical necessity and possibility are not appropriate criteria of evaluation. Rather, the pragmatic modality of cogency or soundness is the basis for evaluating substantial inferences, cogent arguments being those that rationally motivate acceptance of their claims. As Habermas explains, "where a discourse ends can be decided neither by logical nor empirical coercion alone, but by the 'force of the better argument.' This force we call *rational motivation*."[38] Because discourse proceeds through the exchange and examination of substantial arguments, Habermas contends that the conditions under which a rationally motivated consensus is grounded depend upon "the freedom to move from a given level of discourse to increasingly reflected levels."[39] That is, since substantial arguments constitute an open system, rather than a closed deductive system, participants must be free to alter the level of abstraction in their discussion at any time.

Habermas describes four levels of abstraction at which communication may proceed: action, theoretical explanation and value justification, meta-theoretical and meta-value inquiry, and self-reflection. The first two levels have been described previously under the rubric of communicative action and discourse, respectively. In discourse, interactants rely on what Toulmin terms "warrant-using" arguments to advance and defend their claims. However, Habermas recognizes that the cogency of a warrant-using argument "depends on the lingustic system in which it is formulated, on the conceptual schema in terms of which phenomena and data are selected and described."[40] Therefore, arguers also must be free to move to the meta-theoretical and meta-value level and inquire into the adequacy of the conceptual/linguistic system in terms of which arguments are framed. In other words, arguers must be able to speculate about and critically examine the nature of the argumentative "field." At this level of abstraction, participants examine the goals of the field, the basic methods of inquiry, competing paradigms, and so on. In short, speakers employ what Toulmin calls "warrant-establishing" arguments. Passing on to self-reflection, the most abstract level of communication, arguers become free to examine systematic alterations in the initially chosen conceptual and linguistic system, and are further free to inquire into the nature, function and purpose of knowledge itself. Here, interactants employ what might be termed "field-establishing" arguments. At this ultimate level, the boundaries between theoretical and value questions tend to dissolve, "because the practical question: what

[38] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 18.
[39] McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," p. 144.
[40] McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence," p. 144.

knowledge *ought we desire* (after we know what should count as knowledge) is obviously dependent on the theoretical question, what knowledge are we *able to desire?*"[41]

This, then, is Habermas' "logic of discourse." It is a logic, Habermas argues, that "must be differentiated both from the logic of statements, which gives the rules for the construction and transformation of statements given constant truth values, and from a transcendental logic which examines the relevant fundamental concepts (categories) for the construction of objects of possible experience. The logic of discourse is a pragmatic logic. It examines the formal properties of argument-contexts."[42] Moreover, Habermas claims that this is a universal logic, since all argument-contexts display the same formal characteristics, regardless of the particular field in which argument occurs. In saying this, Habermas claims to have uncovered the "unchanging 'rational framework' of discussion" whose existence Toulmin directly denies.[43]

By mandating freedom of movement among the various levels of communication, Habermas' logic of discourse ensures that all relevant validity claims become subject to critical scrutiny. Insofar as there is freedom to move from level to level of communication, there is justification for regarding a consensus as arising from "the force of the better argument" rather than from an ideology, constraints, or domination. A consensus thus may be regarded as warranted "if and only if freedom of movement between the levels of discourse is assured by the *formal properties of discourse.*"[44]

These formal properties of discourse are the defining characteristics of what Habermas terms "the ideal speech situation." The constitutive conditions of the ideal speech situation (and therefore the preconditions for discourse) are summarized in the so-called general symmetry requirement: "The communication structure gives rise to no constraints only if there is a symmetrical distribution of the opportunities for all participants in the discourse to choose speech acts and carry them out."[45] That is, the freedom to consider all potentially relevant statements regarding the validity of a claim is secured only on the condition that all participants to the discussion (as well as, counterfactually, all potential participants) are guaranteed the equal opportunity to select and employ the various types of speech acts. More specifically, all participants in the discussion must have the equal opportunity to initiate and perpetuate discussion through communicative speech acts, the equal privilege to put forth assertions, challenges, explanations, and interpretations through constative speech acts, the equal chance to make their true feelings known by the expression of intentions, attitudes, and affective states through representative speech acts, and the equal power to command, forbid, permit, and refuse through regulative speech acts. When fulfilled, these conditions insure not only unlimited discussion, but discussion that is free from the external constraints of domination and from the internal constraints of

[41] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 32.
[42] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 22.
[43] Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, p. 499.
[44] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 33.

[45] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 33. The conditions of Habermas' ideal speech situation are quite comparable with the normative analyses of argumentative transactions presented by several rhetorical theorists. See Wayne Brockriede, "Arguers as Lovers," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 5 (1972), 1-11; Douglas Ehninger, "Argument as Method: Its Nature, Its Limitations, and Its Uses," *Speech Monographs*, 37 (1970), 101-110; and Maurice Natanson, "The Claims of Immediacy," in *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation*, ed. Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965).

ideology. Moreover, Habermas notes that the fulfillment of these requirements corresponds to a realization of truth, freedom, and justice in the context of the speech situation.

Habermas recognizes that the ideal speech situation is just that—an ideal which is manifest rarely, if ever.[46] Further, he is aware that there is no general independent criterion to assess whether a given discourse genuinely achieves the requirements of ideal speech.[47] Consequently, he is led to argue that the realization of the ideal speech situation is a supposition or anticipation inherent in the practice of discourse. That is, entry into discourse *necessarily* involves the presupposition that any discourse will be carried out under conditions of ideal speech, i.e., that the validity of claims will be decided by the force of the better argument and the resulting consensual decision will be a warranted consensus. Although any empirical discourse may, in fact, be distorted by departures from the conditions of ideal speech, without the *supposition* or *anticipation* of these conditions the practice of discourse would be rendered impossible.

Now since communicative action, in which speakers make implicit validity claims, presupposes the possibility of discourse in which these claims are explicated and critically assessed, and since entry into discourse itself presupposes or anticipates the conditions of ideal speech, and further, since the conditions of ideal speech themselves describe a set of normative standards, then Habermas' analysis of communication uncovers a set of rational principles that are not arbitrary. Rather, rational principles and a substantive normative structure are prefigured by the nature of communicative action itself. Every act of communication—and thus the possibility of social life—necessarily presupposes the responsibility and autonomy of human actors. Responsibility is presupposed in assuming that all actors will be able to account for their validity claims. The responsibility of accountability in turn presupposes the autonomy of an actor to choose and employ a full range of speech acts in defending his claims. Because autonomy and responsibility are presupposed in every act of communication, in the very possibility of a human community, then the human interest in both rational decisions and the elimination of constraints on rational processes may be apprehended *a priori*. In other words, rationality or reason (understood as the communicative responsibility and autonomy of actors) is disclosed as a universal constitutive feature of human life.

An Integrated Conception of Rationality

Clearly, there are a number of important similarities in the analyses of rationality offered by Toulmin and Habermas. Both theorists are vigorous in their attack of positions equating rationality with formal logicality, arguing instead that rationality is displayed in the pragmatic process of making, testing, and revising substantial claims. Similarly, both reject correspondence theories of truth (theories defining "true statements" as those accurately describing the states of affairs they purport to represent) in favor of consensus theories of truth (wherein "true statements" are those that are socially agreed upon). Most significantly, the substantive content of Toulmin's "impartial standpoint of rational judg-

[46] Habermas observes that both "the spatio-temporal limits of the communicative process and the limits of psychic endurance of the participants in the discourse" make the empirical attainment of the ideals problematic ("Theories of Truth," p. 34).

[47] Habermas, "Theories of Truth," p. 34.

ment" and the conditions of the ideal speech situation are quite comparable; Toulmin's imperative requires considering "all available insights into the empirical matrix within which understanding has to be sought,"[48] while the ideal speech situation is structured to insure that all arguments and points of view receive full expression and careful consideration. Indeed, the four facets of Habermas' general symmetry requirement may be viewed as defining the conditions guaranteeing that "all available insights" receive their due in the decision making process.

There are, however, several areas where Habermas' analysis of rationality surpasses that of Toulmin's. First, although Toulmin and Habermas both endorse a consensus theory of truth, Toulmin only implicitly realizes the crucial element of a warranted consensus and fails to analyze formally the features of such a consensus. On the other hand, Habermas explicitly articulates the special epistemic status of a warranted consensus and provides a detailed characterization of its formal properties.

Second, Toulmin asserts that all persons have an interest in being rational and an ability to be so. Toulmin, however, does not provide sufficient proof for these claims; his examples only demonstrate that on some occasions some persons engage in rational behavior. In contrast, Habermas demonstrates that a rational capacity and a desire to overcome forms of irrationality are prefigured by the nature of communication, and therefore are an inherent aspect of being human. Moreover, Habermas' analysis goes beyond Toulmin's in providing a theoretical explanation of irrational behavior as manifestations of "systematically distorted communication," and in further articulating the seeds of a method for critiquing and overcoming such irrationality.[49]

Third, and most important, Habermas offers a firmly grounded, explicitly defended set of rational standards while Toulmin leaves us with an "impartial standpoint of rational judgment" that is simply asserted. Unlike Toulmin's rational imperative, Habermas' principles of rational decision making are not liable to charges of arbitrariness and relativism. Rather, they are anchored by the facticity of human communication. As such, they constitute a synthetic *a priori*: principles that are universally true because of the fundamental nature of the empirical world, rather than true by virtue of analytic definition. Thus, although the substantive content of these theorists' general rational principles is quite similar, Toulmin's principles remain undefended while Habermas' are epistemologically secured.

Despite these problems, Toulmin's contributions to a detailed analysis of rationality should not be overlooked. For example, Habermas constructs his "logic of discourse" directly from Toulmin's analyses of substantial arguments and the rational criterion of cogency. Habermas acknowledges Toulmin for the crucial insight that an argument does not consist of a chain of sentences, but rather a chain of speech acts. Unlike a chain of sentences, the transition between these pragmatic elements of speech cannot be warranted in an exclusively formal-logical manner, and thus the place of logical modalities such as impossibility and contradiction is taken over by pragmatic modalities such as incongruity and cogency. More-

[48] Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, p. 499.

[49] Habermas' analysis of irrational communication and aspects of a critical method designed to overcome such irrationality is detailed in Brant R. Burleson, "Rhetorical Criticism as the Critique of Ideology: The Perspective of Jürgen Habermas," paper presented at the annual convention of the Central States Speech Association, 1978.

over, Habermas credits Toulmin with securing the epistemological status of substantial arguments, those arguments where even though no deductive relation between backing and warrant obtains, there is, nonetheless, adequate *motivation* for holding the warrant to be plausible. And it is just because the testing of most meaningful claims proceeds through the exchange of speech acts constituting substantial arguments that Habermas maintains that a "logic of discourse" is necessary.

Habermas further appears to fully endorse Toulmin's conception of disciplines or fields and the field-dependence of substantive justificatory criteria. Such an endorsement provides grounds for overcoming one potential objection to Habermas' discussion of rationality: it is possible to read Habermas as asserting that fulfillment of the conditions of the ideal speech situation is the necessary and sufficient condition for the production of true statements. Such a reading would maintain that truth becomes a purely procedural matter, since the consensus theory of truth and conditions of the ideal speech situation articulate only formal, field-independent procedural criteria for assessing the merits of validity claims. While Habermas is ambiguous about whether the cogency of an argument is to be determined solely on procedural grounds, it is reasonable to maintain that conformity with the principles of the ideal speech situation is a *necessary but insufficient* condition for the production of valid statements. Such procedural criteria must always be supplemented by, in Toulmin's terms, the more field-dependent criteria embedded within the "working logic" of a particular discipline. That is, the processes through which the merits of a claim are assessed have both a formal component (defined by the conditions of the ideal speech situation) and a substantive component (defined by the historically developed goals, ideals, and problems of the particular discipline in whose frame argument is conducted).[50]

More specifically, there are two different, but complementary manners in which men demonstrate their rationality. Each of these forms of rationality have their expressions in argumentation theory: O'Keefe's recent distinctions between argument$_1$, a kind of speech act which persons perform or make, and argument$_2$, a kind of communicative interaction in which persons engage, provide a convenient framework for examining these two different sorts of rationality and their manifestations in argumentative behavior.[51]

When a claim is challenged, persons construct and put forward arguments$_1$ in the attempt to either establish or reject the claim. "Good" arguments$_1$ are those that cogently or convincingly establish their claim. Arguments$_1$ are assessed by examining the relevance of reported data, the appropriateness of the warranting rule of inherence, the applicability of possible reservations, and so on. Of course, all of these assessments must be made within the confines of the particular substantive standards of judgment developed in an historically evolving discipline, i.e., within the working logic of a discipline. That is, standards for the general criterion of cogency as well as the specific criteria of, e.g., relevance, appropriateness, and applicability, vary both across disciplines and within disciplines at different points in history. Thus criteria for judging arguments$_1$ are always field-bound, and in constructing and criticizing arguments$_1$ according to the procedures, practices,

[50] This modification of Habermas' analysis of rationality is suggested by Burleson and Kline.

[51] Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 121-128.

and standards of a specific field, men display a field-bound form of rationality.

Persons make arguments$_1$ when they believe a claim might be contested or in response to an actual challenge. In the latter case, participants may enter into an argument$_2$, a form of communicative interaction. From the perspective advanced here, argument$_2$ has the primary function of testing claims to validity.[52] Argument$_2$ is thus one form of managing the phenomena of social disagreement, and all rational disciplines employ this method of resolving disputes in preference to other means such as coercion, violence, breaking off interaction, or strategic behavior.[53] Regardless of discipline, participants presumably believe that the outcome of their argumentative interaction will be decided by the force of the better argument (the best argument$_1$) or they would not bother to engage in the process of arguing. Given that argument$_2$ serves the function of testing claims to validity and that participants expect that the validity of the contested claim will be determined by the force of the better argument, a "good" argument$_2$ is one that ensures that this function and expectation are fulfilled. The requirements of ideal speech articulated by Habermas represent an attempt to provide a formal characterization of the conditions necessary for the full realization of these functions and expectations; they thus provide a formal characterization of a "good" argument$_2$. Because arguments$_2$ in all disciplines proceed through the process of advancing and criticizing (usually substantial) arguments$_1$, the logic of argument$_2$ (or the "logic of discourse") is field-invariant or universal. Thus, men also demonstrate their rationality by acting in accord with the field-independent logic of discourse and the conditions of ideal speech.

In sum, working logics serve in the assessment of the rational legitimacy of claims within a specific field, while the logic of discourse ensures that such testing processes are themselves rationally legitimate. Thus, both a field-dependent working logic and a universal logic of discourse play essential roles in the process of testing and assessing claims to validity, and rationality is demonstrated by adherence to the rules of *both* logics. Such a stance does no violence to either theorist's position, but rather suggests ways of fruitfully integrating Toulmin's macro-institutional analysis of rationality with Habermas' micro-interactional analysis.

Conclusion

Because this essay has focused on differences between Toulmin's and Habermas' theories, in concluding it is important to emphasize the essential point of similarity in the two philosophers' discussions of rationality: for both men, rationality is manifested fundamentally in the context of argumentative encounters. Rationality has little to do with the construction of deductively

[52] My notion of argument$_2$ is at variance with O'Keefe's most recent explication, where arguments$_2$ are paradigmatically characterized "as simply interactions in which extended overt disagreement between interactants occurs"; see Daniel J. O'Keefe, "The Concepts of Argument and Arguing," in *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, ed. J. Robert Cox and Charles A. Willard (American Forensic Association, forthcoming). Although O'Keefe's notion surely better captures the ordinary language sense of the concept, it therefore necessarily includes a wide array of phenomena not traditionally of interest to argumentation scholars and theorists of rationality. The conception of argument$_2$ forwarded here makes the existence of argument$_2$ contingent on the exchange of arguments$_1$, and further assumes that interactants are sincerely committed to resolving contested claims on the merits of the advanced arguments$_1$ (i.e., assumes the participants are "rationally motivated"). This admittedly more restricted view of argument$_2$ appears more useful in the context of developing theories of rational behavior.

[53] The position taken here closely resembles that articulated by Ehninger in his "Argument as Method."

entailed sets of propositions, but everything to do with the conduct of persons who engage in the unconstrained exchange of ideas. Rationality is not reducible to reasoning with abstract formal structures, but is displayed only in the attitudes and behavior of those who sincerely seek answers to questions having theoretical and practical significance. Rationality does not depend on analytically drawn conclusions, but is realized in the open and free intercourse among persons pursuing the resolution of concrete problems.

Rationality, then, is manifested in the social processes through which human actors attempt to reach consensual decisions about matters of common interest. Further, only those decisions achieved under conditions approximating Habermas' ideal speech situation or Toulmin's comparable rational imperative can legitimately claim to produce a warranted consensus regarding the merits of a particular statement. Thus the merit of a claim is ultimately dependent upon the formal characteristics of the argumentative transaction in which it is examined. To put the matter somewhat more forcefully, the truth of a claim, in the final analysis, is inseparable from the social means through which the claim is assessed, tested, and justified.

A CRITICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF JÜRGEN HABERMAS' HOLISTIC APPROACH TO RHETORIC AS SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Donald P. Cushman and David Dietrich

The twentieth century has witnessed a resurgence of interest in the conditions of human existence. Along with this general interest in an ontological and phenomenological focus has emerged a small but productive group of scholars who view man as an essentially rhetorical animal. Rhetoric has usually been regarded not as a necessary condition of human existence, but rather as a tool needed to correct human error or guide those who are incapable of generating true knowledge. In a society of competent human beings, rhetoric would not be needed. This view has been opposed in contemporary society by several scholars who have attempted to stress human communicative competence as the very essence of human activity and to provide a detailed description of the role rhetorical discourse plays in all aspects of human life.[1] One scholar who has addressed these issues in a very profound manner is the German critical social theorist, Jürgen Habermas. Habermas explores the ontological grounding of rhetorical discourse in human interaction and provides a phenomenological analysis of the rhetorical process as an architectonic art. This paper will briefly explicate Habermas' analysis and examine its sufficiency. This undertaking proceeds in three stages: (1) an examination of Habermas' ontological grounding of man's rhetorical nature in interaction, (2) an examination of Habermas' phenomenological explication of the rhetorical process, and (3) an evaluation of the sufficiency of his analysis.

An Ontological Grounding of Human Rhetorical Faculties

Jürgen Habermas provides an ontological grounding for human interaction in three innate cognitive interests: the technical, the practical and the emancipatory. These cognitive interests link the origin, application and validity of human understanding as they are embedded in experience and ongoing action. The *technical interests* employ the analytic-empirical method of positivistic science in order to ground knowledge of events and yield principles which allow the manipulation of the environment in order to insure the success of instrumental action. However, the analytic-empirical method is inherently subject to prejudice by specific group and individual interests. The *practical interests* employ the *historical-hermeneutic* method of communication sciences in order to ground knowledge of human understandings and consenses in the intersubjective values of the community. Such knowledge is concerned

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[1] See Gerard A. Hauser and Donald P. Cushman, "McKeon's Philosophy of Communication: The Architectonic and Interdisciplinary Arts," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 6 (1973), 211-234; John P. Scott, "Critical Social Theory: An Introduction and Critique," *British Journal of Sociology*, 29 (March 1978), 1-20.

with the manipulation of communication in order to insure the success of social interaction. However, the historical-hermeneutic method which involves prejudicial interpretations of the past in order to guide action in the present and set goals for the future is inherently subject to the domination and distortion of specific group and individual interests.

At the center of Habermas' theory is the *emancipatory interest* which employs the *critical-dialectic* method of the rational sciences in order to reveal the bases of group and individual prejudices in the use of the analytic-empirical and historical-hermeneutic methods. The emancipatory interest of critical theory provides a rational reconstruction of the bases of group and individual prejudice so that where that prejudice is wanted it can be validated and employed to guide inquiry and where it is unwanted or dominating and distorting it can be replaced by a preferred prejudice. The emancipatory interest thus employs critical-dialectical knowledge of the strengths and limitations of technical and practical knowledge in such a manner as to liberate man from historically contingent constraints through a process of self-reflection in order to insure the success of rationally grounded social evolution.

The model Habermas adapts for the practical realization of emancipatory interest is that of Freudian psychoanalysis. The analyst, motivated by critical interest, employs a methodology for getting behind experiential explanations offered by a patient or actor in order to reveal the unconscious deep structure which creates the pattern of behavior and to make such explanations available to the actor. Where the pattern is disturbed or repressed it can be corrected; where it is the desired pattern it has been validated. The goal of such an analysis is the self-realization and group-realization of members in a culture which allow for the emergence of unconstrained rational action. Critical dialectic cannot yield technical or practical knowledge; however, it can provide the conditions for approximating an ideal speech community which alone produces *authenticated* knowledge. Habermas thus grounds human action ontologically in a "rational community whose participants are held together by the bonds of logos, through which alone the citizens could hope to fully actualize human potentials."[2]

A Phenomenological Description of the Rhetorical Process

Each of these interests is manifest in *everyday communication* within a community and each involves a body of common-sense knowledge. Such knowledge takes the form of the action-related interpretations of experience which guide human activity. However, each of these interests may also be challenged or made manifest in *discursive communication*, or *rhetorical communication*, where nothing is taken for granted and where all knowledge can only be redeemed in argumentative reasoning. Discursive communication involves a phenomenological reduction in which everyday belief is suspended so that a thorough investigation of its rational basis can take place. Habermas maintains that only through such a process can a rational, true consensus be attained. Society is thus established, maintained and modified only by discursive communication—rhetoric. Rhetoric is thus viewed as an architectonic evolutionary process in which "reason has an 'interest' in the realization of human capacities: logos can disclose a telos to-

[2] William Sullivan, "Communication and the Recovery of Meaning: An Interpretation of Habermas," *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 18 (1978), 70.

ward which human life strives and which judges the quality of that life. This interest finds expression in the community of equals held together in common adherence to speech as the guide to life."[3]

Habermas provides a phenomenological explication of this rhetorical process through an analysis of (1) a universal pragmatic, (2) a theory of communicative competence, (3) a consensus theory of truth, and (4) an ideal speech situation. A universal pragmatic is posited by claiming that human beings can intuitively distinguish between the objectivity of external natures, the normative character of society, the intersubjectivity of language and the subjectivity of internal natures.[4] These intuitions are viewed as operating with the force of practical necessity in all problem-solving situations. If these intuitions have any systematic import, then Habermas believes that one should be able to demonstrate corresponding structural equivalencies in the communication process, the primary medium by which individuals resolve problems in ordinary life. The truth value of this claim is thus to be redeemed by examining the necessity of these four intuitions for communicative interaction.

The primary unit of analysis in interaction is said to be the speech act. The empirical grounding of speech acts is secured by the observation "that context-dependent verbal or non-verbal utterances can without change in meaning be replaced by speech acts of an explicit and standardized form."[5] With the successful performance of a series of speech acts, an interpersonal relationship is established in communication between two competent communicators. Such a relationship functions at two levels: (1) an understanding established by the use of performative verbs expressing an *illocutionary act* and (2) an understanding established by the use of some phrases establishing *propositional content*. The uncoupling of these two components of a speech act is a necessary condition for separating two levels of communication: the level governed by intersubjectivity and the level governed by objects in the world. The capacity to make such a separation also yields a differentiation of the interactive from the cognitive use of language. The competence to distinguish the cognitive from the interactive use of language allows an agent to step back from an ongoing interaction and attribute to speech the status of an independent medium capable of examination and reconstruction. Discursive or rhetorical communication allows for the examination of speakers' claims regarding external natures, the normative order of society, their own subjectivity and ultimately language itself.

For Habermas, human communicative competence rests on an individual's capacity to employ and redeem when challenged the use of these four intuitions in communication. Such a conception of communicative competence presupposes linguistic competence, the basic qualifications of speech and the role-taking capability to enter into symbolic interaction.[6] Communication which serves to regulate human interaction thus functions within a background consensus which recognizes at least four different types of validity claims: (1) claims that utterances are understandable, (2) that their propositional content is true, (3) that the

[3] Sullivan, p. 70.

[4] Jürgen Habermas, "Some Distinctions in Universal Pragmatics: A Working Paper," *Theory and Society*, 3 (1976), 155.

[5] Habermas, "Some Distinctions in Universal Pragmatics," p. 156.

[6] Jürgen Habermas, "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence," *Inquiry*, 13 (Winter 1970), 360-375.

speakers are sincere in their utterances and (4) that the utterances are right or appropriate in their performance of speech acts. Ongoing interaction processes naively assume the validity of these claims. However, occasions arise in which one or more of these claims is problematic, when the consensus governing the interaction is called into question.[7] What then are we to do if the truth of an utterance or the appropriateness of the norms governing interaction are called into question? A process is required to restore an old or create a new consensus. Habermas argues that the validity of problematic truth or normative claims can only be redeemed *discursively*, that is, by entering into rhetorical processes whose sole purpose is to judge the truth of opinions or the appropriateness of norms. Habermas terms the first of these processes *theoretic discourse* and the second *practical discourse*. In discourse one seeks to offer arguments and provide justifications.

Habermas claims that the normal context of coordinative action involves an implicit reference to such discourse. Agents involved in coordination make at least three mutual assumptions: (1) the other intentionally holds the stated beliefs; (2) the other intentionally follows the norms in which they are engaged; and (3) if pressed, the other is capable of discursively justifying these norms and beliefs. It may of course be true that this assumption of accountability is counterfactual, but such an assumption is necessary if a consensus is to have rational and moral grounds. The possibility of rhetorically grounded consensus forms the background against which interaction takes place.[8]

When one accepts the possibility of rhetorically grounded consensus, an issue arises as to how it is that one can distinguish between a grounded and ungrounded consensus. Habermas argues that rhetorical justifications are normative arguments, that such justifications contain an essential connection between knowledge and human interests. In light of the possibility that interactants engaged in communication may possess differing interests and yet be interdependent, Habermas introduces two interconnected notions—the consensus theory of truth and the ideal speech situation—in an attempt to reveal the systematic distortion of communication created by differing prejudices.[9]

It should be obvious from the outset that Habermas does not construe truth in terms of factual consensus; that agents have arrived at a consensus does not secure the truth of the consensus. A true consensus is one that can be discursively redeemed. However, how is one to discursively redeem a claim when it is called into question without falling into an infinite regress? Here Habermas attempts to draw the work of Peirce and Toulmin who analyze what is involved in grounding an argument in terms of its pragmatic substance rather than its rational form:

> . . . Peirce and Toulmin have both seen the rationally motivating force of argumentation in the fact that the progress of knowledge takes place through substantial arguments. The latter are based on logical inferences, but they are not exhausted in deductive systems of statements. Substantial arguments serve to redeem or to criticize validity claims, whether the claims to truth implicit in assertations or the claims to correctness connected with norms (of action and

[7] Thomas McCarthy, "Translator's Introduction," in Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), pp. xiii-xiv.

[8] R. R. McGuire, "Speech Acts, Communicative Competence and the Paradox of Authority," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 10 (Winter 1977), 37-38.

[9] Jürgen Habermas, "On Systematically Distorted Communication," *Inquiry*, 13 (Autumn 1970), 205-218.

evaluation) or implied in recommendations and warnings. They have the force to convince the participants in a discourse of a validity claim, that is, to provide rational grounds for the recognition of validity claims. Substantial arguments are explanations and justifications, that is, pragmatic unities, in which not sentences but speech acts (sentences employed in utterances) are connected . . . In theoretical discourses . . . consensus is produced according to rules of argumentation different from those obtaining in practical discourses—which serve to justify recommended norms. However, in both cases the goal is the same: a rationally motivated decision about the recognition (or rejection) of validity claims.[10]

The validity of a rationally grounded consensus rests on the appropriate testing and evaluation of substantive arguments in what Habermas terms "an ideal speech situation." In an ideal speech situation, participants dismiss all motives except the cooperative effort to arrive at a consensus based on the better argument. Such a situation is characterized by a general *symmetry requirement*. Habermas argues:

An unlimited interchangeability of dialogue roles demands that no side be privileged in the performance of these roles: pure intersubjectivity exists only when there is complete symmetry in the distribution of assertion and dispute, revelation and concealment, prescription and conformity among the partners of communication. As long as these symmetries exist, communication will not be hindered by constraints arising from its own structures. (1) In the case of unrestrained discussion (in which no prejudiced opinion cannot be taken up or criticized) it is possible to develop strategies for reaching unconstrained consensus; (2) on the basis of mutuality of unimpaired self-representation (which includes the acknowledgment of the self-representation of the Other as well) it is possible to achieve a significant rapport despite the inviolable distance between the partners and that means communication under conditions of individuation; (3) in the case of full complementarity of expectations (which excludes unilaterally constraining norms) the claim of universal understanding exists as well as the necessity of universalized norms. These three symmetries represent, incidentally, a linguistic conceptualization of what are traditionally known as the ideas of truth, freedom, and justice.[11]

The symmetrical distribution of communication certifies that a consensus when reached is valid. Habermas admits that the conditions of actual consensus formation may not always fulfill the condition of symmetry, but he argues that the closer one comes to attaining this ideal the more secure the grounding for the consensus:

If under these conditions a consensus about the recommendation to accept a norm arises argumentatively, that is, on the basis of hypothetically proposed, alternative justifications, then this consensus expresses a "rational will." Since all those affected have, in principle, at least the chance to participate in the practical deliberation, the "rationality" of the discursively formed will consists in the fact that the reciprocal behavior expectations raised to normative status afford validity to a common interest ascertained without deception. The interest is common because the constraint-free consensus permits only what all can want; it is free of deception because even the interpretations of needs in which each individual must be able to recognize what he wants become the object of discursive will-formation. The discursively formed will may be called "rational" because the formal properties of discourse and of the deliberative situation sufficiently guarantee that a consensus can arise only through appropriately interpreted, generalizable interests, by which I mean needs that can be communicatively shared.[12]

Thus, by positing a universal pragmatic and then analyzing the manifestation of that pragmatic in communicative competence and a consensus theory of truth certified by an ideal speech situation Jürgen Habermas provides us with a phenomenological representation of the rhetorical process.

[10] Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 107.

[11] Habermas, "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence," pp. 371-372.

[12] Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 108.

An Evaluation of the Issues Raised By This Analysis of the Rhetorical Process

Having explored an ontological grounding of rhetoric as an architectonic art and a phenomenological representation of the rhetorical process, we are now in a position to evaluate such an analysis.

Three problems appear to plague Habermas' attempt to ground an architectonic rhetoric of social action in an interdependence between critical-dialectic, historical-hermeneutic and analytic-empirical methods: (1) an insufficient rationale is provided for guaranteeing the invocation of critical-dialectical processes before an antagonistic auditor in time of need, thus precipitating an *authenticity crisis;* (2) an insufficient analysis is provided of methods for creating and increasing adherence to a rationally grounded prejudice in times of need, thus precipitating a *legitimation crisis;* (3) an insufficient rationale is provided for the link between ideal and substantive certification procedures, thus precipitating an *action crisis.*

First, an insufficient rationale is provided for guaranteeing the invocation of critical-dialectical processes before an antagonistic audience in time of need, thus precipitating an *authenticity crisis.* Habermas claims that all communication which serves to regulate interaction functions on a background consensus that at least four conditions have been met: that the utterance is understandable, that the propositional content is true, that the speaker is sincere and that the speech act is appropriate. Habermas argues that human prejudice undergirds this background consensus and that at times such prejudices are subject to distortion and domination. He thus invokes the need for a critical-dialectical method in the form of an ideal speech situation in order to unmask irrational prejudice where it exists and to secure rational prejudice where it is present. The *authenticity* of the background consensus governing communication can only be redeemed by discursive communication in the ideal speech situation. However, an ideal speech situation is only invoked if an occasion arises where one or more of the background claims governing communication becomes problematic. Habermas' attempt to guarantee the authenticity of knowledge claims fails in two ways. First, he fails to provide a rationale as to the necessity of such a challenge arising when the prejudices guiding analytic-empirical and historical-hermeneutic inquiry are subject to distortion and domination. Second, he fails to provide a rationale as to why, even if such an occasion did arise, it would of necessity arise before an antagonistic auditor, thereby guaranteeing a systematic evaluation of the basis for a consensus.

The historical use of both methods of inquiry suggests that ideal speech situations do not of necessity arise in time of need or before antagonistic auditors. One might consider, for example, Thomas Kuhn's analysis of the use of the analytic-empirical method in times of paradigmatic science.[13] To the extent that one has been trained or socialized under the influence of a paradigm science, the utterances within such a context would be understandable, their propositional content would seem to be true, speakers could certainly seem sincere and speech acts could seem appropriate. Under such circumstances it is not likely that foundational challenges would arise. If one did arise it could readily be satisfied by appealing to assumptions shared by a majority of

[13] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 181-191.

participants in the ideal speech situation. Similar problems arise in the use of the historical-hermeneutic method. As Gadamer indicates, to be socialized into a culture or historical tradition is frequently to place that tradition beyond the realm of conscious reflection and, since other participants within the tradition act in a similar manner, few if any occasions arise which would invoke the ideal speech situation.[14] Again, if challenges did arise, one could justify claims by invoking the ideal speech situation in the presence of the faithful. Paradigmatic presuppositions exert the same influence on adherents that cultural presuppositions exert upon their adherents. Yet, such paradigmatic and cultural prejudices have frequently proved, in retrospect, to be dominating and distorting. What Habermas fails to demonstrate is why validity claims must of necessity become problematic before an antagonistic auditor when they are generated by leading interests which are guided by distored and dominating prejudices. Such a failure precipitates an authenticity crisis.

What is needed here is an analysis of what constraints might induce or even guarantee the confrontation of opposing assumptive systems. One such rationale is provided by Cushman and Tompkins who argue that three trends in the latter half of the twentieth century have converged to generate a set of circumstances that of necessity create such confrontations. In the realm of knowledge claims they have argued that the rise of a plurality of metaphysical positions, a rules epistemology, and a rational agent ethic necessarily creates a rational confrontation between alternative prejudicial positions. Likewise in the realm of cultural interaction they argue that similar forces have generated within and between cultural diversity, an increase in interdependence between groups and individuals, and an increased need to certify prejudice in alternative perspectives in order to gain understanding and respect as an antecedent condition for coordinated action.[15] Such an analysis guarantees the necessity of invoking an ideal speech situation, thus *preventing an authenticity crisis.*

Second, an insufficient analysis is provided of the methods for creating and increasing adherence to a rationally grounded prejudice in times of need, thus precipitating a *legitimation crisis.* Habermas claims that the historical-hermeneutic method generates coherent interpretations of cultural principles where the existing principles admit of such an analysis. However, hermeneutics cannot generate new cultural principles where they do not already exist; neither can they create or increase adherence to cultural principles where current levels of commitment are insufficient to motivate serious action. Similarly, the critical dialectical method by Habermas' own admission cannot create knowledge or commitment. The method can only certify existing levels of knowledge and commitment when they are rationally grounded, destroy knowledge and commitment when they are not grounded or decrease knowledge and commitment when they are insufficiently grounded.

What is missing from Habermas' analysis of human interests and the methods involved in generating knowledge is a recognition of creative rhetorical interest and a constructive method in addition to a dialectical-rhetorical method. The creative adherence function of argument can be

[14] Hans G. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, tr. D. E. Linge (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1976), pp. 34-35.

[15] Donald P. Cushman and Phillip K. Tompkins, "A Theory of Rhetoric for Contemporary Society," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Winter 1980, in press.

differentiated from the historical-hermeneutic and critical-dialectical function. Here we suggest that the former functions to create prejudice and solicits an audience's rational commitment to prejudice, while the latter two function to solicit interpretive understanding of existing prejudices and a rational critique of existing understandings and commitment. Thus, it can be seen that Habermas does not provide a method for creating or increasing adherence in rational will formation. The corrosive effect of a critical dialectic on the historical-hermeneutic interpretations of culture in the absence of a constructive rhetoric is explored in some detail by Richard Weaver in *Visions of Order*. Here Weaver examines the effect of Socrates' critical dialectic on the historical-hermeneutic interpretation of Greek culture. Socrates, like Habermas, attempts to employ a critical dialectic for revealing the insufficiencies of cultural beliefs. Weaver provides a very careful analysis of why Greek society in the face of Socrates' erosion of cultural values and inability to substitute alternative principles for guiding action had to kill Socrates.[16] Without a constructive rhetoric, society cannot progress. Without a critical dialectic, society cannot progress rationally. Both are necessary as balancing influences within human cultural evolution. What is required here is the addition of a fourth interest and metholodgy to Haberfnas' system. A creative rhetoric is required, capable of balancing Habermas' critical-dialectical inclinations. Two such systems have been developed recently: the language-action paradigm of Frentz and Farrell,[17] and Cushman and Tompkins' theory of rhetoric for contemporary society.[18] Both address the interdependence of rhetoric and dialectic in balancing creative and critical interests and provide an analysis of how the two methods can be employed to create adherence to rationally secured beliefs, thus *avoiding a legitimation crisis*.

Third, an insufficient rationale is provided for the link between ideal and substantive justification procedures, thus precipitating an *actioncrisis*. Habermas' focus upon the pragmatics of action, combined with his respect for German idealism and the critical-dialectical method, undermines his theory of argument and his theory of action. He precipitates an action crisis in two separate but interdependent ways.

First, the insufficiency of the link between ideal and substantive justification procedures is manifest in his conception of certification within the ideal speech situation. The critical-dialectical certification procedures specified by Habermas require: (1) that we free our discussion of presuppositions from the constraints of prejudice, action and context and place it in an ideal speech situation where the symmetrical distribution of opportunity governs discussion; and (2) that we force the determination of the rationality of a prejudice by employing Toulmin's substantive method of argument. However, the power of substantive argument is its ability to capture the logic of a problematic situation by examining the substantive forces influencing action in context constrained and evaluated by field-variant criteria. Habermas' ideal speech situation creates a contradiction. Arguments are at once to be freed from prejudice and constraints and yet judged in terms of their contextual and field-variant charac-

[16] Richard Weaver, *Visions of Order* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1964), chapters 3 and 4.

[17] Thomas Frentz and Thomas Farrell, "Language-Action: A Paradigm for Communication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (December 1976), 333-349.

[18] Cushman and Tompkins, in press.

teristics. Some analysis needs to be provided to link the ideal and substantive justification procedures, or else the problem will precipitate an action crisis. The problem we are attempting to illuminate is similar to that facing a debater who freed from the constraints of action in a reciprocal speech situation, provides ideal justifications for the validity, feasibility and desirability of a solution to a problem. The unreality of such ideal solutions is always manifest in the lack of fit between what, in principle, can resolve the problem and the contextual exigencies which render such solutions incapable of guiding action, thus precipitating an action crisis.

Second, the insufficiency of the link between ideal and substantive certification procedures is manifest in his conception of the interdependence between analytic-empirical, historical-hermeneutic and critical-dialectical certification. The prejudice which guides technical and practical interests is subject to certification within the analytic-empirical and historical-hermeneutic methods of their capacity successfully to guide action in problematic situations. Within such methods, that which is rational must meet the pragmatic test of successfully guiding appropriate action in substantive context; that which is irrational fails to do so. The critical-dialectical method on the other hand attempts to certify the prejudices guiding technical and practical interests by an ideal procedure freed from the substantial constraints of action. That which is rational must meet criteria of certification which are context free; that which is irrational is contextually bound. If these two certification procedures work at odds with one another, then few if any principles will emerge for guiding actions, thus creating an action crisis. Experience suggests that not only do these methods work at odds with one another, but that they may represent non-overlapping domains. We take it to be Gadamer's central thesis in his debate with Habermas that, when one is in culture and employing a historical-hermeneutic method to understand and interpret events, one is caught up in the flow of events and the pressures that flow generates. One cannot then reify that flow, stand back from it and provide justifications. To do so would destroy the very base of historical cultural interpretations.[19] We take it to be the central thesis of survey researchers in their debate with laboratory researchers, that analytic-empirical findings generated in "ideal" laboratory experiments do not generalize to ongoing contextual processes because they destroy the very logic involved in the substantive flow of events.[20] Habermas must provide a more extended analysis of the link between ideal and substantive justification procedures or precipitate an action crisis.

What is required here is some conception of the relationship of problematic situations to human understanding and action. Several profound treatments of this topic already exist. In philosophy, John Dewey's treatment of contextual reasoning processes in his book, *How Men Think*, combines both the idealistic principles of validity and the contextual principles of feasibility and desirability in the solution of practical and theoretical problems.[21] Lloyd Bitzer, in his classic treatment of rhetorical situation, modifies the pragmatic theory of valuation in constructing the relationship be-

[19] Dieter Misgeld, "Discourse and Conversation: The Theory of Communicative Competence and Hermeneutics in the Light of the Debate Between Habermas and Gadamer," *Cultural Hermeneutics*, 4 (1977), 321-344.

[20] Scott, pp. 13-14.

[21] John Dewey, *How Men Think* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1932).

tween practical situations and the context of inquiry which *avoids an action crisis.*[22]

While Habermas' system is problematic, it is not without its merits. Its most profound contribution is the recognition that prejudice (human interest) plays a necessary role in all inquiry and that such prejudice can become dominating and distorting without a critical procedure for manifesting its strengths and weaknesses. This has been a lesson that only recently has come to the forefront in the natural sciences in the attacks of Polanyi-Hanson, Kuhn, Toulmin and Feyerabend upon the objectivity of the scientific method.[23] Likewise, human interest has always played a central role in our understanding of historical-hermeneutics. It is to Habermas' credit that he has provided a rationale for transcending historical prejudice and evaluating it. However, having provided for such a central role for prejudice in analytic-empirical and historical-heremeneutic knowledge, it is surprising that he did not grasp the importance of a practical rhetoric which uniquely creates and increases adherence to legitimate human prejudices and allows for a mediation of ideal and contextual certification procedures in the construction of principles and responsive action.

[22] Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1 (January 1968), 6.

[23] Ernan McMullin, "Two Faces of Science," *Review of Metaphysics*, 27 (June 1974), 655-676.

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COMMUNICATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY. By Jürgen Habermas. Translation and introduction by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press, 1979; pp. xxiv+239.

Professor Habermas opens the last essay of this volume with the words "To know whereof one speaks is always beneficial; this is especially true when dealing with problems of legitimacy. . . ." I would add, when dealing with Habermas himself; he is a man of prodigious erudition, and doesn't spare his readers. Nothing less than extended professional study of the development of critical theory would qualify one to do justice to *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. There is much to be gained, however, from this collection of essays by one interested in rhetorical and argumentation theory, even short of a full, evaluated apprehension of the author's thought. The translator, Thomas McCarthy, has provided an excellent introduction which gives a preview of the main ideas. Helpful background for putting the work in perspective is provided by the essay review, "Critical Theory and Communication: A Selective Literature Review," by Thomas Farrell and James Aune in the February 1979 issue of *QJS*.

The volume must, of course, be seen against the background of Marxist thought, and of the neo-Marxist thought that was developing toward mid-century. The purpose of the latter was to reexamine and restore Marxism as a credible critique of capitalist society. Marxism as a critical theory of society was seen to have been overly mechanistic, especially as developed by the later "Marxists," not adequately allowing for the influence of culture on the development of society. Scientific determinism did not allow sufficient place or scope for individual autonomy.

Some of Habermas' critics claim that in his formulation of critical theory he has essentially deserted Marx, that his theory is ahistorical, not adequately empirically grounded. If he has been too revisionist for certain of his critics, it is nonetheless the case that his thinking is based on the Marxian tradition. But Habermas has sought to develop a theory of society that is both scientific and philosophical—he has sought to discover a logical development of society that at the same time leaves room for innovation by reflective human beings. Without the latter there would be no social evolution as he sees it. In his attempts to develop his theory he has also drawn significantly on Freud. Freud insisted throughout his lifetime that he was a scientist, and he was meticulous in grounding his theories on empirical observation. Yet he could not deal with the human being, he could not help the human being emancipate himself from his neuroses without dealing with the individual's dreams, needs, fears—without, that is reconstructing the distorted meanings underlying the crisis condition, so that new and undistorted meanings could provide the basis for constructive action. In a sense, what Freud was doing for the individual, Habermas wants to do for society: by rational reconstruction of the distorted symbolism—existing so-

cial ideologies (which correspond to the neuroses of the individual)—emancipation from domination is to be possible, and new norms developed and legitimized.

McCarthy points out that Habermas does not think of the methodological views he has presented thus far as a final statement of his critical theory. "The essays collected in this volume," McCarthy states, "provide an overview of the results that have emerged." Habermas looks upon his work as a "research program," with much developmental work yet to be done; "it might be best described as a three-tiered research program. The ground level consists of a general theory of communication—as Habermas calls it, a universal pragmatics—at the next level this theory serves as the foundation for a general theory of socialization in the form of a theory of the acquisition of communicative competence; finally, at the highest level, which builds on those below it, Habermas sketches a theory of social evolution which he views as a reconstruction of historical materialism."

The first chapter in this volume, titled "What is Universal Pragmatics?" is, according to McCarthy, the best available statement of the "strategy and structure of the program." "The task of universal pragmatics," says Habermas, "is to identify and reconstruct universal conditions of possible understanding." He asserts that his theory of communicative competence can have fully as rational a basis, as "universal a core" as linguistic competence. Further, he adds, ". . . other forms of social action—for example, conflict, competition, strategic action in general—are derivatives of action oriented to reaching understanding." Reaching understanding is made possible through communicative competence, the theory of which is basic to Habermas' critical theory of society.

The main ideas of the theory of communicative competence, are, in McCarthy's words: "the relation between communicative action or interaction and discourse, the consensus theory of truth, and the supposition of the ideal speech situation." Communicative action or interaction is the ordinary communicative process in which we assume the comprehensibility of the utterance, its truth value, the truthfulness of the speaker, and the appropriateness of the speaker's performing the speech act—it conforms to the norms of the situation. Discourse occurs when the validity claims assumed in communicative interaction are called into question, and must be rationally justified—discursively redeemed, to use Habermas' terminology. The consensus theory of truth is essentially that rational consensus—truly rational consensus—is what constitutes truth. Such rational consensus can be achieved, rather, the possibility exists that it can be achieved—the formal requirements for it are met—in the ideal speech situation. The ideal speech situation "requires a 'suspension of the constraints of action,' a putting out of play of all motives except that of a willingness to come to an understanding. . . ." Such a speech situation does not, of course, exist, but the formal requirements can be expressed. We must act as if such consensus is possible. Such anticipation is grounded in the fact that in any speech situation we assume that agreement is possible.

The ideal speech situation is one which exemplifies the conditions of a good and true life. There is justice in the equality of functioning of the participants; the truth exists in rational consensus. Thus, this theory underlies his now famous statement to the effect that "the truth of statements is linked in the last analysis to the intention of the good and true life."

In the chapter on "Moral Development and Ego Identity" Habermas reviews Kohlberg's well known three levels in the development of moral consciousness, each level of which has two stages. At the first stage of the preconventional level "the physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness"; at the second stage right action consists of that which satisfies the individual's own needs. At the second or conventional level, in stage three "good behavior is that which pleases others and is approved by them." In stage four is the "law and order" orientation—rules and order, doing one's duty, determine what is right. At the postconventional level the individual is more autonomous, functioning on the level of norms. In stage five there is clear recognition of moral values; there is recognition of the right as the standards consciously and critically agreed upon by society. In stage six, "Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen *ethical principles. . . .*" While this sequence of stages purportedly represents a logic of moral development, Habermas feels that the grounding is not adequate, and he proceeds to point out "the basic concepts of communicative action that must be presupposed for the perception of moral conflicts." Thus he derives the moral levels, which he subscribes to, from the successive developmental stages of communicative competence.

Role competence and communicative competence develop together. At the early levels the child responds to concrete situations in terms of consequences. As reflective capacities develop the child recognizes different roles and social norms that regulate roles. With increasing reflexivity the norms themselves are examined and viewed in the light of principles. At this stage there are competing interpretations of needs; the norms require justification. The increasing reflexivity and role competence correlate with, rather provide the basis for, the stages of moral development. It is at the last stage that individuals [role bearers] "are transformed into persons who can assert their identities independent of concrete roles and particular systems of norms." To fully realize this identity Habermas adds a seventh stage to Kohlberg, the stage of moral and political freedom. At this stage "need interpretations are no longer assumed as given, but are drawn into the discursive formation of the will." Habermas is by no means at his clearest in setting forth this level of moral consciousness.

The chapter titled "The Development of Normative Structures" is an attempt to show that the development of moral consciousness, legal-moral systems in society, is analogous to the development of moral consciousness in the individual. "Cognitive developmental psychology has shown that in ontogenesis there are different stages of moral consciousness, stages that can be described as preconventional, and postconventional patterns of problem solving. The same patterns turn up again in the social evolution of moral and legal representations." He cautions, of course, about making too explicit a comparison between ontogeny and the evolution of society, but he holds that we can get insights into the latter from the former.

Habermas notes stages in the development of ordering principles or structures: the magical-animistic view of paleolithic societies, "particularistic and not very coherent"; the stage where myth is the ordering influence; the level of cosmological world views, philosophies, and the higher religions; and the present, of which he says,

> The advance of the modern sciences and the development of moral-practical will-formation were not prejudiced by an order that—although

grounded—was posited absolutely. For the first time, the universalistic potential already contained in the rationalized world views could be set free. The unity of the world could not longer be secured objectively, hypostasizing unifying principles (God, Being, or Nature); henceforth it could be asserted only reflectively, through the unity of reason (or through a rational organization of the world, the actualization of reason). The unity of theoretical and practical reason then became the key problem for modern world interpretations, which have lost their character *as* world views.

"These fleeting allusions," says Habermas, "are meant only to render plausible the heuristic fruitfulness of the conjecture that there are homologies between the structures of the ego and world views." The highest, or at least the latest stage of world views, then, corresponds to highest stages in the development of the moral consciousness. As was seen, moral development and the development of ego identity were part of the same process. Analogously, the collective identity of the group develops. (This is all very complicated.)

Societies as well as individuals get out of whack (my terminology!). New integrating structures must be developed, norms legitimized. Habermas discusses the possibility of reconstructing the developmental pattern of societies, of understanding the individual and societal learning processes, ultimately in the interest of opening up possibilities for purposive rational action. We have a long way to go. "Only after rationalization processes (which require explanations that are both historical and materialist) have been historically completed can we specify the patterns of development for the normative structures of society. These developmental logics betoken the independence—and to this extent the history—of the spirit."

The chapter on "A Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" most explicity speaks of the theme of the evolution of society, although, of course, all chapters contribute to it.

Getting or producing or making a living is assuredly the basic activity of the human being as well as of subhuman species. In human societies various social structures develop around the processes of labor, from the cooperative social structure of primitive hunting bands to the complex structures associated with modern industry and other complexes of productive forces. "We call a system that socially regulates labor and distribution as *economy*. According to Marx . . . the economic form of reproducing life is characteristic of the human stage of development." Habermas quotes Marx:

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.

The concept of the centrality of labor, of productive relationships, remains in Habermas.

As circumstances of labor change, social structures change; new forms arise to accommodate and direct the new instrumental means. Traditionally, five major shifts have taken place, from the primitive communal band, to ancient slaveholding, to the feudal, the capitalist, and the socialist. Presumably there has been a direct line of development from the first to the last; there has been an inevitability about the process—and inherent teleology.

There are two main interpretations of the influence of the economic infrastruc-

ture on the cultural superstructure, one which says the former determines the latter, and the other which says that the former places limits on the development of the latter. Further interpretations hold that it is only in the early or critical stage of a new social integration (as society passes from one level of integration to another) that the infrastructure is determining.

The development of new technology, new instrumental means, implies that there is a growth in knowledge. The society learns new productive methods that call for new relationships. It is Habermas' view that the assumed endogenous learning mechanism can account for the continuous instrumental learning and for the problems that arise, but does not explain how the problems can be solved. Such new forms of relationships call for "knowledge of a moral-practical sort." If the cultural superstructure is determined by knowledge of the technical means of production, where is the moral-practical knowledge to come from? Habermas proposes this answer:

> The species learns not only in the dimension of technically useful knowledge decisive for the development of productive forces but also in the dimension of moral-practical consciousness decisive for structures of interaction. The rules of communicative action do develop in reaction to changes in the domain of instrumental and strategic action; but in doing so they follow *their own logic.*

While the role and communication competencies as well as the moral consciousness develop only in interaction, there is an internal logic to their development. They are not tied to the technical knowledge of productive forces. It is essentially this quasi-independent moral-practical knowledge that makes possible the kind of social innovation that can restructure institutions and norms to constructively utilize the new knowledge of productive forces. Thus the evolution of society takes place. It must be emphasized that the development and legitimization of new norms is a function of the communicative competence—in the rich sense in which Habermas uses the term—of individuals. Individuals acquire their competencies not as isolated monads but by growing into the symbolic structures of their worlds. This development passes through three stages of communication, the stage of "symbolically mediated interaction," where "speaking and acting are still enmeshed in the framework of a single, imperativist mode of communication," the stage of "propositionally differentiated speech," where "speaking and acting are separate," and the third stage of "argumentative speech," where "the validity claims we connect with speech acts can be made thematic." When we assume learning processes not only in the dimension of technically useful knowledge but also in that of moral-practical consciousness, we are maintaining (the existence of) developmental stages for both productive forces and for the forms of social integration."

In an interesting section Habermas considers certain major problems or needs that innovations in the evolution of society have themselves brought about. He takes as a guide to social evolution "those problems and needs that are first brought about by evolutionary advances. At every stage of development the social-evolutionary learning process itself generates new resources, which mean new dimensions of scarcity and thus new historical needs." At successive stages certain needs, speaking very broadly, have brought about responses that have shaped society: the need for power over nature, the need for regulation of the social system (legal security), the

need for values as social inequalities become thematic. In postmodern society he speculates that the search for meaning may become a dominant theme. With respect to the last the possibility is raised that with social power involved in the development of institutions related to motivation, the problem of manipulation might arise.

The legitimation of norms is, of course, a central theme in Habermas' work. "Legitimacy," says Habermas, "means that there are good reasons for a political order's claim to be recognized as right and just; a legitimate order deserves recognition. *Legitimacy means a political order's worthiness to be recognized.*"

There is indeed a legitimation crisis today. The infrastructure of technological means of production is much the same in capitalist and socialist countries. What political order can best accommodate and give direction to the forces of production? How can a rational political order be established, developed, or evolved, grounded in reason, where the formal conditions of justification have legitimating force? It is "the problem of finding," in Stan van Hooft's words, "and rationally justifying the goals that society should pursue and to do this without appeal to an ontology of ideal ends or an anthropology of human aspirations that cannot be rationally established." Basic to this possibility is communication free from domination, free from systematic distortions on the individual and societal level. Universal pragmatics forms the theoretical foundation for Habermas' resolution of the problem.

To put it as simply as possible, Habermas is seeking a rational society. Students of rhetoric and argumentation should be heartened that such work is being done in this direction. We should get a renewed sense of the possibilities of and for rational discourse in society.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO REASONING. By Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke, and Allan Janik. New York: Macmillan, 1979; pp. viii+343.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers of *JAFA* will surely agree that Stephen Toulmin is one of the important philosophers of our age, and that his investigations into argument and logic have had a profound impact on the teaching of argumentation. To a certain extent, however, that influence has been filtered through several interpreters who have applied Toulmin's theoretical developments to pedagogy. Therefore, when the philosopher, himself, collaborates with a scholar in argumentation to produce a basic textbook on reasoning, the result is a publishing event of more than usual interest. For those reasons, two reviews have been requested from persons who have followed Toulmin's work closely.

I

This is an unusual book. It is not a text in symbolic logic, but it does not quite fit the mold of an ordinary argumentation text. What it provides is what its title promises: an introduction to reasoning, to the activity of giving reasons in support of a claim. And as one might expect, the scheme used to analyze reasoning is Toulmin's familiar model of argument.

Following a useful introduction to the volume (Part I), a lucid description of the elements of Toulmin's general model of argument is offered (Part II). Part III is concerned with the assessment of arguments, and Part IV discusses reasoning in various "special fields" (with

one chapter each to the law, science, the arts, management, and ethics). This echoes the distinction offered in *Uses of Argument* between field-dependent and field-invariant features of argument, and it is here that the theorist of argument may find this undergraduate textbook illuminating.

While the distinction between field-dependent and field-invariant features of argument was central to *Uses of Argument*, in *Uses* the concept of "field" was never very satisfactorily explicated. Toulmin's *Human Understanding*, while putatively an elaboration of the ideas first offered in *Uses*, nevertheless seemed not to address very directly the nature of a "field of argument." But the present volume suggests that *Human Understanding*, in its elaboration of the concept of a "rational enterprise," in fact does amplify the idea of "field." In the present work, the first hint is given early on: "In all these fields of human activity [law, science, medicine, business, politics], reasoning and argumentation find a place as central elements within a larger human enterprise. And to mark this feature—the fact that all these activities place reliance on the presentation and critical assessment of 'reasons' and 'arguments'—we shall refer to them all as *rational enterprises*" (p. 28). And "field" and "rational enterprise" are used interchangably throughout, including the all-too-brief discussion (in the introduction to Part IV) of the several ways in which rational enterprises may differ in their argumentative procedures. The concept of a rational enterprise, of course, holds center stage in *Human Understanding*, and one should not think that the present volume attempts to match that work's careful discussion. The only point I wish to make here is that *An Introduction to Reasoning* may be profitably read as cementing the relationship between *Uses of Argument* and *Human Understanding*, by clearly specifying the notion of "rational enterprise" as the lynchpin of Toulmin's analysis.

But this is a book designed for introductory undergraduate courses, and the authors are quite successful in bringing Toulmin's model into a classroom text. There are many thoughtfully constructed examples and exercises; the writing is lucid and direct, yet conversational (without being overly familiar or "California"). The central question an argumentation instructor will want to raise, however, concerns the utility of a book that focuses on reasoning *per se* rather than on the rhetorical/dialectical aspects of argumentation that commonly receive emphasis in debate and argumentation courses. But this text is better-adapted to such courses than one might imagine from its title, for "reasoning" is construed by the authors to be "not a way of *arriving at ideas* but rather a way of *testing ideas critically*. It is concerned less with how people think than with how they share their ideas and thoughts in situations that raise the question of whether those ideas are *worth* sharing" (p. 9). This orientation is buttressed by the relabeling of what was called (in *Uses*) the "conclusion" in the model of argument; that element of the model is now termed "claim," to help convey the sense that the "endpoint" of an argument is not conclusionary but rather is something open to revision and reformulation.

This approach is all of a piece with the view underlying *Uses of Argument* and *Human Understanding*. This book is thus not a "logic" text which emphasizes modus tollens and its brethren as ways of arriving at conclusions given specified premises. It is genuinely an "arguing" text, in which many concepts familiar to argumentation teachers will be found, though occasionally in new garb. While it is not an academic debate

text (and hence there is no mention of, say, counterplans or inherency or cross-examination techniques), ideas such as burden of proof and presumption are treated quite adequately, and there is extensive consideration of the varieties of argument (sign, analogy, etc.) and fallacy (hasty generalization, question-begging, etc.). Those who find Toulmin's model an inadequate tool for the analysis of argument or who emphasize the recondite style and concepts of academic debate will likely find this book wanting as a text. But one who wishes to provide his or her students with an introduction to the understanding and rational assessment of practical argumentation should examine Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik's book.

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II

Innovations in theory in any discipline are often greeted with immediate praise and scorn. One of the most influential innovations in argumentation theory occurred with the publication in 1958 of Stephen Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument*. Toulmin's influence on argumentation has been substantial; the book received its share of scorn, however, largely from philosophers who considered such innovations a "proposed revolution" and from varying perspectives attacked with vengeance. In light of his later publications (e.g., *Foresight and Understanding*, 1962, Human *Understanding*, 1972, and *Knowing and Acting*, 1976), his early book on argument seemed to stand alone in its scope and breadth; one wondered if Toulmin would ever follow up the questions he had raised about arguments-in-general.

The 1979 book, *An Introduction to Reasoning*, is, in part, that follow up. Written by Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik, no single part is identified with any one author. The book is divided into four sections. Part I, A General Introduction, provides a short statement of goals, definitions and forums for argument. Part II, Basic Pattern of Analysis, develops chapters on the parts of the model: claims and grounds, warrants, backing, modalities and rebuttals along with a chapter of introduction and conclusion. Part III, Rational Assessment, consists of two chapters on Practical Criticism, a chapter on language, communication and reasoning, and one chapter on fallacies. Part IV, Special Fields of Reasoning, contains separate chapters on Legal Reasoning, Argument in Science, Arguing about the Arts, Reasoning about Management, and Ethical Reasoning. The treatment of special fields covers nearly half of the book.

The book is designed as a textbook for an undergraduate course in argumentation; it is probably best suited for the freshman-sophomore level. There are abundant examples to illustrate generalizations about argument and a plethora of exercises following chapters (including a twelve page example comparing design features and functions of five new cars described in *Consumer Reports*). Readers of *The Uses of Argument*, concerned with whether Peterson actually turned out to be a Roman Catholic, whether Anne had red hair, or whether Harry was indeed a British subject, will be pleased to find new examples. Readers of this book will be confronted with the problems of whether the Oakland Raiders will win the Super Bowl, whether the new version of *King Kong* is superior to earlier versions, and whether short term municipal bonds are good interim investments.

There are some modifications in the "Toulmin layout." Chapter 3 deals with "Claims and grounds," and data has been renamed grounds, which are de-

fined as "statements *specifying the particular facts about a* situation relied on *to clarify and make good* the previous claim" (Their italics). "Grounds" are used interchangeably with "facts," but the change from "data" to "grounds" serves to include such things as common knowledge, which the term "data," alone, may cause people to neglect. In addition, the authors add to the concept "conditions of relevance," and most conditions are particularly appropriate to special fields (such as relevance in science, relevance in law, etc.). How such "conditions of relevance" are determined or applicable across fields is not developed.

Chapter 6 combines treatment of modal qualifiers and rebuttals. The modal qualifiers are used to indicate the "rational strength" of the claim on the basis of the relationship of grounds, warrant and backing to that claim. Modal qualifiers are listed from "necessarily" to "or so it seems" in a list of apparently decreasing probability. The authors do not explain how rebuttals lessen the force of a claim, or what modals are more appropriate under varying conditions of rebuttal. Rebuttals are treated as "extraordinary or exceptional circumstances" that can lessen the force of arguments. The authors argue that presence of a rebuttal sets aside "a general presumption"; "an argument that would normally have been sound is invalidated as a result of those special circumstances." It is not clear whether the presence of rebuttals generally invalidates arguments, nor how rebuttals affect the modalities used to qualify a claim. They attempt to distinguish the "normal" from the "exceptional" case in rebuttals, but the short discussion proceeds through one example and provides the arguer no criteria to help distinguish the normal from the exceptional.

One of the most intriguing ideas in *The Uses of Argument* is the notion of field-dependency, a concept placing argument between the extremes of immutable logic and individual subjectivity. However, the discussion of what constitutes a field or how arguments function differently in separate fields is unnecessarily terse. Arguments apparently belong to the same field "when the data and conclusions in each of the two arguments are, respectively, of the same logical type; they will be said to come from different fields when the backing or the conclusions in each of the two arguments are not of the same logical type." Toulmin does not provide criteria for determining similarity in logical type, and this distinction does not help us differentiate fields. He also suggests that when those engaged in a human enterprise agree on goals and procedures we may take this to be a field. In *Human Understanding* he suggests another characteristic of a field as the norms held by its members. Chapter 12 of *An Introduction to Reasoning* is a brief overview of the distinctions between fields. The authors argue that fields are differentiated by the "general character of each of the enterprises" and "the various kinds of forums that exist within each enterprise." The brevity of discussion, however, prevents the reader from understanding the criteria necessary to distinguish fields, and the concept of fields seems to emerge again from examples. Such examples include science, law, arts, management, and ethics. At various times in Toulmin's writings, "fields" has been equated with "disciplines," "rational enterprises," "forums of judgment," or "intellectual endeavors." Some are described as "broad"; some as "compact." Even ethics is described in *Human Understanding* as an activity which may not be a discipline at all. (For a recent full discussion of the problem of

identifying fields, see Steven B. Hunt, "The Genre of Rational Argument," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1973, pp. 98-139.)

While several of the essays in the last part of the book are excellent (particularly the essay on science), reasoning through these examples does not provide the reader sufficient criteria to distinguish fields or to tell whether the authors' choice of examples necessarily entails a field. Let us take the example of law.

The legal "field" may actually consist of a number of subfields, each with differing values, norms, and even forums. The traditional view of law as *stare decisis* features the need for stability in law, yet this is but one of several viewpoints. Alternatively, the court could strive for justice (as a goal), treating each case without reference to past cases, or as a form of rule utilitarian process of deciding broad principles. Other positions emphasize the need for law to change with changing conditions and each decision must measure societal impact. Levi argues that legal reasoning is typified by a "moving classification system" which allows for change while maintaining some stability. Frank emphasizes the latitude open to the judge, and suggests that, since judges are the only ones to apply precedents—which are often vague—law often depends on the personal bias of the judge. All of this is to argue that law may not be one field, but even using the authors' criteria, a series of fields. (I am indebted to Mr. Walter Ulrich for the discussion of different goals, procedures and forums in law. See Walter Ulrich, "The Implications of Legal Reasoning for a System of Argument," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, in progress.)

The necessity of providing clear criteria for identifying fields is illustrated in the chapter on fallacies. While this at first appears to be a standard chapter on fallacies, one caveat changes the complexion of the chapter: "Arguments that are fallacious in one context may prove to be quite solid in another context." Apparently fallacies are not unsound arguments *per se* (although the chapter goes on to treat them as such); rather the generic weaknesses of fallacies may differ across contexts, across fields. While the authors do not explain the conditions under which fallacies may be valid in some fields but not others, they concede that the reasoning may be valid in some cases. The rather standard treatment of types of fallacies provides no insight into the selective validity of fallacies.

The book will prove useful as an introduction to argument for the undergraduate student. It is lucid and provides many examples, although the examples need more discussion and application to the generalization being established. As a clarification to a number of problems posed by *The Uses of Argument*, however, the book is likely to be a disappointment.

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UNDERSTANDING ARGUMENTS: AN INTRODUCTION TO INFORMAL LOGIC. By Robert J. Fogelin. New York: Harcourt Brace Janovich, Inc., 1978; pp. xii+351.

Fogelin's approach to the study of informal logic differs from traditional approaches in his emphasis on the linguistic structure and functions of argument rather than on the structure of formal logic. Chapter 1 of the book draws heavily on the thinking of J. L. Austin and H. P. Grice (so heavily that Austin's essay "Performance Utterances" and Grice's essay "Logic and Conversa-

tion" are reprinted in an appendix) to analyze the basic functions and structures of language. This chapter's themes are carried on, with varying success, throughout the rest of the book. Most contemporary argumentation theorists dealing with informal logic reject formal logic because of its rigid structuralism and replace that structuralism with an audience-oriented viewpoint. Fogelin rejects structuralism on message-centered grounds, arguing that language in speech acts may be utilized for a variety of functions which do not fit into traditional logical forms.

Understanding Arguments is divided into two major sections. Part one, "The Analysis of Argument," contains seven of thirteen chapters, but almost two-thirds of the pages of text. After the first chapter on language, Chapter Two studies "The Language of Argument," developing a terminology similar to, but neither identical to nor derived from, the Toulmin system, and specifically without diagrammatic analysis. Chapter Three, on "The Art of Close Analysis," uses an extended example as a basis for a brief but effective discussion of how the terminology of Chapter Two should be applied to actual arguments. Chapter Four discusses "Fallacies of Clarity and Relevance," with heavy emphasis on how the ambiguity of everyday language translates poorly into literal arguments. Only arguments ad hominem and appeals to authority are discussed under the heading of "relevance" fallacies. Chapter Five, "Other Uses of Arguments," collects still more linguistic variations of arguments, including refutation; explanations, and excuses. Chapters Six and Seven provide an overview of formal logic, complete with formal logical symbolism, truth tables, Venn diagrams, and the other traditional attributes of formal logic. The reason for the inclusion of these two chapters, in light of the prior orientation of the text, is not clear. At a minimum, they provide reasonably clear treatment of topic areas which most courses in argumentation are still reluctant to abandon completely.

Part Two of the book consists of chapters on various applications of argument. Although attractive in principle, most of these chapters contain several examples of argumentative discourse from the specified field, but little or no discussion of unique aspects of argument in these fields, and equally scarce sample analysis of the examples provided. The examples given in each field are usually good but quite extended; a larger number of shorter examples in each field would have been less "realistic" but probably of greater pedagogical value. Types of argument illustrated in this section come from public policy, law, morality, science, theology, and philosophy.

Fogelin's *Understanding Arguments* would make a quite acceptable basic text for an introductory course in argumentation: it is clearly written and organized (and quite adequately indexed) and the heavy supply of examples provides basic material for student analysis and discussion. For an introductory course in debate or in applied informal logic, it would require some supplementary material. Fogelin has absolutely no orientation toward debate applications of informal logic, and in addition, shares the common flaw of many formal logic texts that his analysis is primarily *descriptive* of existing discourse rather than *prescriptive* for students who wish to learn how to argue effectively. Fogelin's linguistic approach to informal logic should prove to be both provocative and accessible to undergraduates.

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